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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
AND FIFTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 11 March 1992, at 10.30 a.m.

President:	Mr. ARRIA	(Venezuela)
Members:	Austria	Mr. HOHENFELLNER
	Belgium	Mr. NOTERDAEME
	Cape Verde	Mr. BARBOSA
	China	Mr. LI Daoyu
	Ecuador	Mr. AYALA LASSO
	France	Mr. MERIMEE
	Hungary	Mr. ERDOS
	India	Mr. GHAREKHAN
	Japan	Mr. HATANO
	Morocco	Mr. SNOUSSI
	Russian Federation	Mr. LOZINSKY
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David HANNAY
	United States of America	Mr. PICKERING
	Zimbabwe	Mr. MUMBENGEGWI

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March 1992, I should like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Thomas R. Pickering, Permanent Representative of the United States of America, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of February. I know I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Pickering for the great diplomatic skill, effectiveness and unfailing courtesy with which he conducted the Council's business during a very productive and important month.

EXPRESSION OF WELCOME TO THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL AND OF APPRECIATION TO THE FORMER UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like, on behalf of the Council, to welcome Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and to extend to him our best wishes for success in the important task he has just assumed. We look forward to cooperating with him in the work of the Security Council.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Council, appreciation to Mr. Vasiliy S. Safronchuk, the former Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, for the cooperation which the Council enjoyed with him over the years. We extend to him best wishes in his future endeavours.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

(a) THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

(b) LETTER DATED 2 APRIL 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/22435)

LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1991 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/22442)

LETTER DATED 5 MARCH 1992 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BELGIUM TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/23685)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I invite the delegations of Iraq and Kuwait to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda in accordance with Article 31 of the Charter of the United Nations and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aziz (Iraq) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I extend invitations under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and Mr. Rolf Ekeus, Executive Chairman of the Special Commission.

(The President)

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the decision taken at its 3058th meeting, held on 28 February 1992, as indicated in the statement by the President of the Security Council of the same date (S/23663), and as agreed in the Council's prior consultations.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, a country Member of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Tariq Aziz, whose presence here today is undoubtedly significant. We collectively aspire to very productive and constructive meetings.

It will be recalled that on 14 February 1992 the President of the Council informed the Council about the interest of the Government of Iraq in sending a high-level technical team to respond to any questions that the members of the Council might put to it on all aspects of Iraq's compliance with resolution 687 (1991) and other relevant resolutions.

Following consultations among members of the Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"I. GENERAL OBLIGATION

"The resolutions concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait impose a number of general and specific obligations upon Iraq.

"As regards the general obligation, Iraq is required, under paragraph 33 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), to give official notification to the Secretary-General and to the Security Council of its acceptance of the provisions of that entire resolution.

"Iraq signified its unconditional acceptance in letters dated 6 and 10 April 1991 (S/22456 and S/22480, respectively) and 23 January 1992 (S/23472).

(The President)

'When the Security Council met at the level of Heads of State and Government on 31 January 1992 the concluding statement made by the President of the Council, on behalf of its members (S/23500), contained the following passage:

"'Last year, under the authority of the United Nations, the international community succeeded in enabling Kuwait to regain its sovereignty and territorial integrity, which it had lost as a result of Iraqi aggression. The resolutions adopted by the Security Council remain essential to the restoration of peace and stability in the region and must be fully implemented. At the same time the members of the Council are concerned by the humanitarian situation of the innocent civilian population of Iraq.'

"On 5 February 1992, the President of the Security Council issued a statement on behalf of its members (S/23517) in which he stated, among other things:

"'In connection with the Secretary-General's factual report [S/23514] on Iraq's compliance with all the obligations placed upon it by resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent relevant resolutions, the members of the Security Council note that while much progress has been made, much remains to be done. ... The members of the Council are disturbed by the lack of Iraqi cooperation. Iraq must implement fully resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent relevant resolutions as was stated in the statement read out by the President of the Council on behalf of its members in the meeting held on 31 January 1992 with the participation of the heads of State and Government (S/23500).'

(The President)

"In a statement made on behalf of the Council on 28 February 1992 (S/23663), the President said:

"'The members of the Council demand that Iraq immediately implement all its obligations under Council resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent resolutions on Iraq. The members of the Council require the Government of Iraq to communicate directly to the Council without further delay an authoritative and unconditional acknowledgement of its agreement to accept and implement the above noted obligations, including specifically to comply with the determination of the Special Commission requiring the destruction of ballistic missile-related equipment. The members of the Council emphasize that Iraq must be aware of the serious consequences of continued material breaches of resolution 687 (1991).'

"I must also draw attention to the further report of the Secretary-General on the status of compliance by Iraq with the obligations placed upon it (S/23687).

"From the aforementioned statements by the President and in view of the reports of the Secretary-General, it will be seen that, despite Iraq's statements of unconditional acceptance of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), the Security Council has determined that Iraq is not in full compliance with all of its obligations.

"II. SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS

"In addition to the general obligation to accept the provisions of resolution 687 (1991) in their entirety, several Security Council resolutions impose specific obligations upon Iraq.

(The President)

"(a) Respect for the inviolability of the international boundary

"By paragraph 2 of resolution 687 (1991) the Security Council demands that Iraq respect the inviolability of the international boundary and the allocation of islands previously agreed upon between Iraq and Kuwait. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of that resolution, the Secretary-General established a Boundary Demarcation Commission to demarcate the boundary between Iraq and Kuwait. Paragraph 5 of the same resolution requires Iraq and Kuwait to respect a demilitarized zone (DMZ) established by the Security Council. The Council has been informed that Iraq has respected the DMZ and that it has fully participated in the work of the Boundary Demarcation Commission. It has also been informed that Iraq refuses to withdraw a number of police posts that are not in line with UNIKOM's principle that both sides should stay 1,000 metres from the boundary line shown on UNIKOM's map.

"(b) Weapons-related obligations

"Section C of resolution 687 (1991) imposes certain specific obligations upon Iraq with respect to its chemical and biological weapons programmes, its ballistic missile programmes with a range greater than 150 kilometres and its nuclear programmes. These obligations are elaborated upon in resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991). The obligations are defined in paragraphs 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of resolution 687 (1991) and they are elaborated upon in paragraphs 3 and 5 of resolution 707 (1991) and paragraph 5 of resolution 715 (1991).

(The President)

"The information relevant to Iraq's compliance with the obligations laid down in the paragraphs of the Security Council resolutions to which I have just referred is reproduced in annex I to the Secretary-General's report (S/23687).

(The President)

"By resolution 699 (1991), the Security Council decided that the Government of Iraq shall be liable for the full costs of carrying out the tasks authorized by section C of resolution 687 (1991). No funds have so far been received from Iraq to meet this liability.

"The Council has noted that since the adoption of resolution 687 (1991) progress has been made in the implementation of section C of that resolution, but that much remains to be done. There is serious non-compliance with the obligations concerning the programmes for weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles and the members of the Council have found this to be a continuing material breach of resolution 687 (1991).

"The Special Commission has informed the Council about the outstanding matters that would at the present time appear to be the most important. The Council's attention is invited again to annex I of the Secretary-General's report, S/23687 of 7 March 1992.

"The Council has also noted the statement by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) contained in the Secretary-General's report of 25 January 1992 (S/23514, section C of the annex). The attention of the Council is drawn to information annexed to the further report of the Secretary-General, S/23687 (annex II), of 7 March 1992, relative to the two last inspections by the IAEA, on Iraq's compliance with its obligations under United Nations Security Council resolutions as they related to nuclear activities.

"In a statement issued on behalf of the members of the Council (S/23609), the President stated on 19 February 1992 that:

(The President)

"'Iraq's failure to acknowledge its obligations under resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991), its rejection up until now of the two plans for ongoing monitoring and verification and its failure to provide the full, final and complete disclosure of its weapons capabilities constitute a continuing material breach of the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991).'

"In a further statement made on 28 February 1992 on behalf of the Council (S/23663), the President said:

"'The members of the Council deplore and condemn the failure of the Government of Iraq to provide the Special Commission with full, final and complete disclosure, as required by resolution 707 (1991), of all aspects of its programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres, including launchers, and of all holdings of such weapons, their components and production facilities and locations, as well as all other nuclear programmes; and the failure of Iraq to comply with the plans for ongoing monitoring and verification approved by resolution 715 (1991). ... Furthermore, the members of the Council equally deplore and condemn Iraq's failure, within the time prescribed by the Special Commission at the request of Iraq, to commence destruction of ballistic missile-related equipment designated for destruction by the Special Commission. The members of the Council reaffirm that it is for the Special Commission alone to determine which items must be destroyed under paragraph 9 of resolution 687 (1991).'

(The President)

"(c) Repatriation of and access to Kuwaiti and third-country nationals in Iraq

"As regards Kuwaiti and third-country nationals in Iraq, Security Council resolutions 664 (1990), 666 (1990), 667 (1990), 674 (1990), 686 (1991) and 687 (1991) impose an obligation on Iraq to release, facilitate repatriation of, and arrange for immediate access to them, as well as the return of the remains of any deceased personnel of the forces of Kuwait and of the Member States cooperating with Kuwait pursuant to resolution 678 (1990). Furthermore, paragraph 30 of resolution 687 (1991) requires Iraq to extend all necessary cooperation to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in facilitating the search for Kuwaiti and third-country nationals still unaccounted for.

"The Security Council was informed by the ICRC in January 1992 that almost 7,000 persons have returned from Iraq to their countries since the beginning of March 1991. The ICRC also stated that despite all its efforts, there are still thousands of persons reported missing by the parties to the conflict.

"A special commission composed of the representatives of France, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the United States has met under the auspices of the ICRC to try to reach an agreement on, among other things, the implementation of paragraph 30 of resolution 687 (1991). However, the ICRC has informed the Council that it has not yet received any information as to the whereabouts of the persons reported missing in Iraq. Nor has it received detailed and documented information on the search conducted by the Iraqi authorities. Finally, it is also still awaiting information on persons who have died while in custody.

(The President)

"The attention of the Council is drawn to section 4, paragraphs 12 to 14, of the Secretary-General's report contained in document S/23687 of 7 March 1992.

"(d) Iraq's liability under international law

"Another obligation concerns Iraq's liability under international law. In resolution 674 (1990), the Security Council reminds Iraq 'that under international law it is liable for any loss, damage or injury arising in regard to Kuwait and third States and their nationals and corporations, as a result of the invasion and illegal occupation of Kuwait by Iraq'. Its liability under international law is reaffirmed in paragraph 2 (b) of resolution 686 (1991) and paragraph 16 of resolution 687 (1991). Resolution 687 (1991) further specifies that it 'is liable under international law for any direct loss, damage, including environmental damage and the depletion of natural resources, or injury to foreign Governments, nationals and corporations, as a result of Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait'.

(The President)

"By paragraph 18 of the same resolution, the Security Council created a Fund to pay compensation for claims that fall within paragraph 16, to be financed by a percentage of the value of the exports of petroleum and petroleum products from Iraq. In view of the existing economic sanctions against Iraq under resolution 661 (1990), Iraq was permitted by the Security Council under resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991) to sell a limited quantity of oil, as an exception, a portion of the proceeds from which would be used to provide financial resources for the Fund. To date, Iraq has not availed itself of this possibility. The Council notes that this authorization is due to lapse on 18 March 1992. The members of the Council are aware of a request by Iraq for a five-year moratorium on meeting its financial obligations, including payments into the Compensation Fund.

"(e) Repayment and servicing of Iraq's foreign debt

"With regard to another obligation, the Security Council, in paragraph 17 of resolution 687 (1991), demands that Iraq scrupulously adhere to all of its obligations concerning servicing and repayment of its foreign debt.

"The attention of the Council is drawn to paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Secretary-General's report (S/23687) of 7 March 1992.

"(f) Return of property

"I now return to the question of return of property. The Security Council, in paragraph 2 (d) of resolution 686 (1991), demands that Iraq immediately begin to return all Kuwaiti property seized by it, to be completed in the shortest possible period. The members of the Council have noted with satisfaction that, as stated in the further report of the

(The President)

Secretary-General, Iraqi officials involved with the return of property have extended maximum cooperation to the United Nations to facilitate the return.

"(g) Monthly statements of gold and foreign currency reserves

"Another obligation is set out by paragraph 7 of resolution 706 (1991), under which the Government of Iraq is required to provide to the Secretary-General and appropriate international organizations monthly statements of its gold and foreign currency reserves. To date, no such statements have been provided to the Secretary-General or to the IMF.

"(h) Undertaking not to commit or support acts of international terrorism

"By paragraph 32 of resolution 687 (1991), Iraq is required not to commit or support acts of international terrorism or allow any organization directed towards commission of such acts to operate within its territory and to condemn unequivocally and renounce all acts, methods and practices of terrorism.

"The Council notes Iraq's statements contained in letters dated 11 June 1991 (S/22687 and S/22689) and 23 January 1992 (S/23472) that it is a party to international conventions against terrorism and that it has never pursued a policy favourable to international terrorism as defined by international law.

"(i) Security Council action with respect to the Iraqi civilian population

"Resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991) provide a means for Iraq to meet its obligations to supply its civilian population with needed

(The President)

humanitarian assistance, particularly food and medicine. To date, Iraq has refused to implement these resolutions. In fact, after initiating discussions with Secretariat representatives on implementation, Iraq abruptly terminated the discussions.

"III. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 688 (1991)

"I should now like to refer to the demands by the Security Council with respect to the Iraqi civilian population. In paragraph 2 of resolution 688 (1991), the Security Council demands that Iraq, as a contribution to removing the threat to international peace and security in the region, end the repression of its civilian population. In paragraphs 3 and 7, the Security Council insists that it allow immediate access by international humanitarian organizations to all those in need of assistance in all parts of Iraq, and demands its cooperation with the Secretary-General to these ends.

"The Security Council remains deeply concerned at the grave human rights abuses that, despite the provisions of resolution 688 (1991), the Government of Iraq continues to perpetrate against its population, in particular in the northern region of Iraq, in southern Shi'a centres and in the southern marshes (Commission on Human Rights resolution 1992/71 of 5 March 1992). The Security Council notes that this situation is confirmed by the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/1992/31, also to be circulated in document S/23685) and by the comments of the Office of the Executive Delegate of the Secretary-General contained in the further report of the Secretary-General.

(The President)

"The members of the Council are particularly concerned at the reported restrictions on the supplies of essential commodities, in particular food and fuel, which have been imposed by the Government of Iraq on the three northern governorates of Dohuk, Erbil and Suleimaniya. In this regard, as the Special Rapporteur has noted in his report, inasmuch as the repression of the population continues, the threat to international peace and security in the region mentioned in resolution 688 (1991) remains.

"IV. CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

"In view of the observations on the record of Iraq's performance, the Security Council has considered itself justified in concluding that Iraq has not fully complied with the obligations placed upon it by the Council. It is the Council's hope and expectation that this meeting will prove an invaluable opportunity to advance in the consideration of this issue as required in the interest of world peace and security, as well as that of the Iraqi people."

That concludes the statement by the President of the Council. I shall now call upon those members of the Council who have indicated their wish to make statements.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): Quoting oneself can easily be perceived as odious, but sometimes it can also serve a useful purpose. In my very first statement in the Council on 14 February 1991, I underlined the paradigmatic importance of the way we deal with and finally resolve this conflict, not only for the future of the region but also for the concept of collective security and the role of the United Nations as a whole.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

The decisions taken by the Council almost a year ago - and I am referring here in particular to resolution 687 (1991) - have to be seen in their overall context. On the one hand, the Security Council laid down a number of obligations on Iraq, guided by

"the need to be assured of Iraq's peaceful intentions in the light of its unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait",

to quote from resolution 687 (1991). Today's meeting and debate are a welcome opportunity to take stock and to provide members of this Council with a basis to evaluate afterwards to what extent our previous decisions were implemented and to what extent we may need to take further action.

On the other hand, this is also an opportune time to recall other motives we had in mind a year ago, to remember some of our more far-reaching aspirations and to reflect on how we can develop them further into practice. I shall come back to this point later on.

As regards the state of Iraqi compliance with relevant binding decisions of this Council, you, Mr. President, have already given a useful comprehensive overview. There are, of course, also a number of recent statements by various Presidents of the Security Council as well as instructiv reports by the Secretary-General, including information provided by the Special Commission, and various reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The picture emerging from all this information is, to say the least, very disturbing indeed. While all obligations placed on Iraq are important, I should like to focus today in particular on two areas.

The first is the humanitarian and human rights situation in Iraq. At the same time that the Iraqi Government is protesting against the embargo imposed by the international community, it has blocked the import of food, fuel and medicines to some areas of the country, in particular those inhabited by

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Kurds. Repressive measures continue to affect also the southern marshes. The detailed report by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights contains additional information on massive human rights violations by the Iraqi Government that were condemned by the Human Rights Commission in a resolution adopted on 5 March 1992. The comments received from the Office of the Executive Delegate of the Secretary-General further document the absence of full Iraqi compliance with resolution 688 (1991).

Another aspect concerns resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991), which gave Iraq the possibility for oil sales to finance, inter alia, the purchase of foodstuffs, medicines, materials and supplies for essential civilian needs for the purpose of providing humanitarian relief. It is deplorable that the Iraqi Government has not yet used these possibilities to provide its population with access to adequate food and health care. We urge Iraq to resume the talks with the United Nations Secretariat on the implementation of this scheme immediately.

The second main area I should like to comment on concerns Iraq's obligations under section C of resolution 687 (1991) and resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991). While there have been signs of better cooperation with some inspections, as referred to in the report of the tenth IAEA inspection (S/23644), overall Iraqi cooperation and compliance continue to fall short. What is particularly worrying is Iraq's failure to provide all information required under resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991) and to acknowledge its obligations and provide the declarations required under the plans for ongoing monitoring and verification approved by resolution 715 (1991). Since other speakers today will no doubt focus on this matter, I shall not belabour this point. Suffice it to point out, therefore, that under the relevant resolutions of the Council, a continuing material breach of its

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

obligations places Iraq in a situation which may have serious consequences, as emphasized repeatedly in recent statements of Presidents of the Council.

At the outset, I tried to place this debate in a wider - one might even say historical - context. What I had in mind was to recall that our decisions last year were seen as part of a broader effort to establish peace and security in the area and, indeed, the region as a whole. On 3 April 1991, the day we adopted resolution 687 (1991), I said:

> "This resolution is rightly based on the premise that the relevant actions to be taken by Iraq represent only first steps towards the goal of establishing a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery in the Middle East and towards the objective of a global ban on chemical weapons. It also highlights the objective of achieving a balanced and comprehensive control of armaments in the region. This will require a responsible approach on the part of the main supplies of arms and of their buyers alike". (S/PV.2981, pp. 119-120)

Almost one year later, this objective has not yet been achieved. Indeed, if one believes recent reports, a new arms race in this volatile region is already well under way.

The last point I should like to attempt to make today concerns collective security and the role of the United Nations as a whole in dealing with conflicts. There is already a vast body of academic literature on how the United Nations was brought into play in the Gulf conflict, on the role of this Council and the authority its decisions conferred upon those acting on their basis. Whole libraries will no doubt in due course be written on the legal and political implications. Suffice it to say here that in many ways a new beginning had been made; some important steps had been taken towards

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

establishing a system of collective security. To my mind, this would be the right path to follow also in the future.

Sir David HANNAY (United Kingdom): I extend my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency, and my thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Pickering, for the work that he did last month.

My Government welcomes the possibility of holding this discussion and the presence at it of a high-level delegation from Iraq headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. It is essential that the Iraqi leadership hear directly from the Council the extent and nature of our concern about Iraq's non-compliance with Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent resolutions, and that it should get a clear, first-hand impression of the Council's determination that its resolutions be fully implemented.

It is important to recall the origins of our discussion this morning and their object. Following the bi-monthly review of sanctions which was completed on 5 February, the Council asked its then President to convey its negative conclusions to the Iraqi Government, and it was in response to this that Iraq asked for the opportunity for this debate. Our discussion is therefore about compliance or rather about the lack of compliance. On this, the key text must be the Presidential statement endorsed by the Council at its meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government on 31 January:

> "Last year, under the authority of the United Nations, the international community succeeded in enabling Kuwait to regain its sovereignty and territorial integrity, which it had lost as a result of Iraqi aggression. The resolutions adopted by the Security Council remain essential to the restoration of peace and stability in the region and must be fully implemented." (S/PV.3046, p. 142)

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

The Council has before it the Secretary-General's excellent factual report of 25 January and the update on it circulated more recently on 7 March. These give a full and detailed picture of the degree of Iraqi non-compliance with this Council's resolutions. It is a sombre and disturbing one. The list of instances of non-compliance is long. They need to be remedied urgently if there is to be any hope of restoring peace and stability in the Gulf region.

Taking the issues in the order in which they arise under resolution 687 (1991), my Government notes the following serious problem areas.

Firstly, with regard to the demarcation of the boundary between Iraq and Kuwait, the work here is proceeding very slowly and has been the object of much dilatory argument from the Iraqi side. It is essential that this work be brought now to a speedy conclusion, and the boundary demarcated so that it should not again become a matter of contention between Iraq and Kuwait.

Secondly, on the issue of weapons of mass destruction, this is an area of very great concern, where the Iraqi performance has from the very beginning been one of evasion, dissimulation and, often, downright dishonesty. In its original disclosures about its weapons of mass destruction, Iraq made a series of statements about its chemical, biological, nuclear and ballistic missile programmes all of which were demonstrated by subsequent inspections to be materially untrue.

Iraq denied that it had a programme for the enrichment of uranium: it in fact had three, a flagrant breach of its obligations under its safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Iraq denied that it had a programme for nuclear weaponization: it now admits it had one, a clear violation of its obligations as a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

Iraq denied that it had a programme on biological weapons: it subsequently admitted that it was conducting biological research for defensive and offensive purposes.

Iraq's disclosures on chemical warfare munitions and facilities and on ballistic missiles were substantially understated. Its original declaration of the missile capability did not mention the supergun.

The work of the Special Commission and the IAEA has been obstructed, in breach of the agreement with the Government of Iraq on all the rights and privileges of those bodies as they seek to fulfil their mandate. The recent obstruction encountered over the Special Commission's use of airfields of its choice in Iraq is simply one case in point.

This track record can give us no confidence that a full picture has yet been disclosed, or that future attempts will not be made to frustrate the work of the Special Commission and the IAEA in Iraq. I note that that is also the view of the Director General of the IAEA and of the Chairman of the Special Commission.

Despite all the good work done by the Special Commission and the IAEA to bring to light the matters concealed by Iraq, we are now confronted with three serious issues in this sector: firstly, there is still not a full and complete disclosure of Iraq's programmes; secondly, Iraq has so far refused to acknowledge its obligations for long-term monitoring; thirdly, Iraq is resisting the implementation of the Special Commission's determinations on the material and installations that need to be destroyed. I hope very much that, as a result of this debate, the Iraqi authorities will understand the absolute need for them to comply promptly on these three points.

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

The full, final and complete disclosure of Iraq's weapons-of-mass-destruction capability demanded by the Council is essential to establishing a materials balance and to making any judgement as to whether Iraq has declared all relevant items. Without such disclosure, the future, on-going monitoring plans of the Special Comission and the IAEA cannot proceed as required by the Council.

As for the destruction issues, this is a further area in which there is no scope for negotiations. As the Council's statement of 28 February stated, the determination of which items need to be destroyed under paragraph 9 (b) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) is for the Special Commission and for the IAEA and for them alone.

Nor is it it acceptable that the Council should be drawn into a discussion of what it would or would not do if Iraq complied with its obligations. The obligation to comply is an absolute not a conditional one, and my delegation hopes very much that Iraq will understand that point.

Thirdly, there is the question of Kuwaiti property. Despite the fact that nearly a year has gone by, much Kuwaiti property remains to be returned by Iraq. The pace at which the property is being returned is unacceptably slow. Some returned property has been found to have been damaged by the Iraqis.

Fourthly, the matter of compensation. Iraq has so far done nothing to finance the compensation fund which has been set up. It has rejected an approach permitting the export of oil under Security Council resolution 706 (1991) which would have provided compensation for the victims of its aggression.

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

Fifthly, with regard to the matter of Kuwaiti detainees, as we have seen in the report of the International Committee of the Red Cross, there are still many Kuwaitis and others languishing in confinement in Iraq long after they should have been returned to their native country.

Sixthly, on the matter of performance bonds, Iraq has not carried out the requirements of paragraph 29 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991).

This is a very summary list of the areas in which Iraq is not in compliance with resolution 687 (1991). If one includes the resolutions adopted subsequent to Security Council resolution 687 (1991), there are many other points on which Iraq is not in compliance.

It is a signal of the Iraqi Government's cynical disregard for the welfare of its own people that it has not cooperated with the implementation of resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991). These provide for fair and equitable arrangements for the export of quantities of Iraqi oil to finance the import of food, medicine and other civilian supplies to meet the humanitarian needs in all regions of Iraq and of all categories of the Iraqi civilian population, and to finance the work of the Special Commission and the Compensation Fund. It is therefore the intransigence of the Iraqi Government and not the action of the Security Council that is the cause of the suffering of the Iraqi people. Furthermore, Iraq has not provided monthly details of its gold and foreign currency reserves in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 706 (1991).

In addition to all these points, Iraq has also failed to comply with Security Council resolution 688 (1991), which was adopted in response to a threat to international peace and security arising from the brutal military action which Iraq took against its civilian population in the Kurdish and

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

Shi'a areas of the country, resulting in a massive flood of refugees across the frontiers of its neighbours. Far from engaging in the dialogue which Security Council resolution 688 (1991) calls for, Iraq has now, for several months, operated an economic blockade against some of these areas, particularly the Kurdish areas. Until the last few days, it has frustrated the opening of United Nations humanitarian centres in some of the Shi'a areas, and it has in many other ways acted in a manner completely inconsistent with Security Council resolution 688 (1991).

The list of Iraqi non-compliance is thus a long and sorry one. It also means that the international community has had to meet the costs of international humanitarian assistance for Iraq, and Britain alone has contributed nearly 50 million pounds sterling since April 1991.

Finally, I am bound to mention the recent report to the Commission on Human Rights by the Special Rapporteur on Iraq, Mr. Max van der Stoel. The contents of this report are truly horrifying and reveal very clearly that Iraq is in serious breach of its human rights obligations under the Charter, international human rights covenants and customary international law as embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Neither the British Government nor this Council has ever had a quarrel, nor does it have a quarrel now, with the people of Iraq, who have suffered so much from the transgressions and miscalculations of their rulers. We remain committed to doing what we can to alleviate their suffering. To this end sanctions on foodstuffs were lifted as soon as Kuwait was liberated and, last September, a scheme for providing 1 billion dollars' worth of humanitarian supplies to Iraq was adopted by the Security Council. It is a matter of deep regret that Iraq has refused to cooperate in the implementation of that

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

scheme. My delegation will support its renewal when it expires later this month, and hopes that Iraq will come to see that this scheme has no ulterior political purpose but is purely humanitarian in scope and that its objective is to reduce the suffering of the Iraqi people.

I hope that there will be a possibility after this formal debate to pose some questions to the Iraqi delegation. I must repeat that it is through full compliance with all relevant Security Council resolutions and by that route alone that peace and stability can be brought again to the Gulf region.

A year ago Iraq was expelled from Kuwait by force of arms under the authority of the United Nations. The use of force was required because Iraq miscalculated and believed that this Council was bluffing. There was an opportunity then for Iraq to comply, which it failed to take. There is an opportunity again now for Iraq to comply. I hope it will not again miscalculate.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. MERIMEE (France) (interpretation from French): Following the liberation of Kuwait, our Council, by resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent resolutions, imposed on the Government of Iraq clear and precise obligations. Since then France has been dedicated to the complete, rigorous implementation of those resolutions. It has always stated that once Iraq abides by the resolutions the sanctions regime can be lifted. It wishes to reiterate that today, in the presence of the high-level Iraqi governmental delegation.

Neither France nor the Security Council wishes to starve the Iraqi civilian population in order to put pressure on its leaders. Not at all. We have sought and found ways to feed the Iraqi population. France drew up and joined other members of the Council in adopting resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991), which allow Iraq to sell a certain quantity of its oil and to buy food products and medicines. My Government deeply deplores the fact that the Iraqi authorities have assumed the very grave responsibility with regard to their people of refusing to make use of those resolutions. It urgently calls on the Government of Iraq to use those provisions and thus avoid increased suffering for its citizens, suffering for which it will bear the sole responsibility, since it has the means to put an end to them.

Nor does France aim to prevent Iraq rebuilding or even increasing its civilian industrial capacity, as Iraq accuses us of doing. My Government and the Security Council pursue two objectives: to eliminate the weapons of mass destruction accumulated by Iraq and to ensure that Iraq's industrial capacity is not used to rebuild its military potential once that has been destroyed.

(Mr. Mérimée, France)

Those two objectives were laid down in resolutions 687 (1991), 707 (1991) and 715 (1991). Iraq is far from having fully implemented those resolutions. I shall give two examples that we regard as being extremely serious.

First, Iraq has still not fully met the obligation to provide information set out originally in resolution 687 (1991) and recalled in resolution 707 (1991) seven months ago. So far the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency have had to work solely on the basis of partial information, meagrely doled out by Iraq, information that has had to be supplemented for the most part by what the numerous missions sent on site have been able to discover by themselves. That situation cannot continue. It is time for Iraq to submit to us, as it must, a precise and full picture of its military programme. Let us not reverse roles here. It is not up to the Council or the Special Commission to ask of Iraq questions that Iraq can choose whether or not to answer. It is up to Iraq to abide finally by its obligations by ceasing to conceal information required of it and by lying to the Special Commission. It would benefit by creating within our Council a climate of trust which at present does not exist because of the many deceptions of which we have proof.

The second example also concerns weapons of mass destruction. We deplore the fact that Iraq still refuses to commit itself unconditionally to apply the two plans for monitoring and continued verification approved by the Security Council in resolution 715 (1991) more than five months ago. Those plans have a binding legal value, and it is unacceptable that Iraq has still not committed itself to their application. Only their implementation will allow Iraq to resume its normal civilian industrial production under effective and objective international control.

(Mr. Mérimée, France)

I shall not dwell in detail on Iraq's numerous failures to fulfil obligations resulting from the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, but I shall note other matters in the policies and practices of the Iraqi Government causing great concern.

The blockade established by the Iraqi authorities against Kurdistan is creating an extremely difficult health and humanitarian situation, causing the risk of a new exodus of populations towards neighbouring States, similar to that which we unfortunately saw last year. There are consistent reports that the Iraqi Government is trying to impose similar measures on certain areas in the south, while it continues to reject the presence of United Nations officials or members of humanitarian organizations in Kirkuk or the region of the marshes.

Our concern is heightened by news that fighting has resumed in the north and that the Iraqi army is continuing to strengthen its positions near the security zone.

The policy of repression that I have described, which deprives large sections of the Iraqi population of their fundamental rights, is a direct violation of resolution 688 (1991), to whose implementation my country is dedicated.

The highly critical nature of the human rights situation in Iraq, as highlighted with precise details in the recent report by Mr. van der Stoel, also causes great concern to my Government.

The balance sheet thus drawn up clearly demonstrates the many failures of the Government of Iraq to meet its obligations under Security Council resolutions, and the continuation - indeed, the aggravation - of policies and practices that cause the international community acute concern.

(Mr. Mérimée, France)

In this context, marked by a consistent desire to challenge the Council's authority, my Government cannot today accept an easing or lifting of the sanctions. Nor does it accept the theory that if Iraq complies with 50 per cent, 70 per cent or 80 per cent of Security Council resolutions the Council must lift the sanctions by a similar proportion. Indeed, as long as Iraq hides documents and materials, on what basis can we state that, for example, the destruction of ballistic missiles has been 100 per cent carried out? In addition, a resolution is not divisible; it must be implemented in full, not according to the proportion that is to the liking of the Iraqi authorities.

I should like to conclude by expressing a wish: that the arrival in New York of the delegation headed by Mr. Tariq Aziz will allow the Government of Iraq to understand that only a policy of cooperation with the United Nations can meet its national interests and the interests of its people. For the Iraqi authorities that is the path of courage and responsibility. The only way for them truly to achieve their objective, the lifting of sanctions, is therefore fully and unconditionally to abide by their obligations.

Mr. PICKERING (United States of America): First, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, and thank you and others for their kind words addressed to me.

During the course of the past year no subject has preoccupied the Security Council more than its efforts to restore international peace and security in the Gulf in the aftermath of Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. We are here today because the requirements of the Council have not been met. We are here also because Iraq has asked to send an authoritative senior official to answer "all the questions". I can assure him that there continue to be many questions which must be answered; pre-eminent among them is why Iraq will not comply fully and completely with the resolutions of this Council.

Nearly one year ago, on 3 April 1991, the Council adopted resolution 687 (1991). Thie comprehensive and unprecedented resolution established a detailed framework for restoring and maintaining international peace and security in the Gulf region. Adoption of this resolution was one of the most important actions ever taken by this Council, responding to the hope of mankind to make the United Nations an instrument of peace and stability.

Resolution 687 (1991) required Iraq to take precise steps on many issues. Iraq formally notified the Secretary-General and the Security Council by letter on 4 April 1991, followed by an Iraqi letter of 11 April 1991 from its National Assembly, of its acceptance of the resolution. Thus, a formal cease-fire to the Gulf conflict came into effect on 11 April 1991.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

Resolution 687 (1991) led to a number of other resolutions to implement its specific parts, including 689 (1991), 692 (1991), 699 (1991), 700 (1991), 705 (1991), 706 (1991), 707 (1991), 712 (1991) and 715 (1991).

This is a long list indeed of detailed resolutions spelling out Iraq's obligations. Unfortunately, from the first Iraq has tried to obfuscate and evade its obligations.

The Council agreed in resolution 687 (1991) that if the Gulf region is to enjoy peace and security Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles must be permanently eliminated. This requires Iraq's cooperation, including the full and complete disclosure of its weapons programmes. The record of Iraq's failure in this regard is unescapable, clear and serious.

Indeed, an unfortunate pattern has developed: Iraq makes declarations of minimal content, declarations which are clearly meant to misinform and misdirect, and to conceal. Iraq repeatedly divulges information related to its weapons programmes only after being presented incontrovertible proof uncovered by the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in their inspections. This is not compliance, but hide and seek, cat and mouse, cheat and retreat.

For example, in the nuclear field Iraq concealed evidence of its electromagnetic isotope separation programme for enriching uranium, to the extent of pouring concrete over tell-tale structures and covering the concrete with rubble. In another instance, Iraq, in its declarations, consistently denied any nuclear "weaponization" programmes until the sixth nuclear weapons inspection team, in September 1991, found extensive and detailed documentation for such programmes. Belatedly, Iraq provided the seventh weapons inspection

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team formal, but still incomplete, written acknowledgement of its nuclear weapons programme. Yet another damning example was Iraq's denial until 6 August 1991, when inspectors found evidence of it, that Iraq had produced unsafeguarded plutonium.

In the area of chemical weapons, Iraq offered contradictory statements regarding the making of chemical munitions. More importantly, Iraq has failed to respond satisfactorily to requests for information on Iraq's past chemical weapons programme, particularly as regards foreign suppliers of munitions, equipment, and precursor chemicals. Instead, Iraq has insisted that its chemical weapons production did not start until 1986 and has claimed that all its chemical weapons were produced indigenously. However, the whole world knows - and this is attested to by the United Nations itself - that Iraq used chemical weapons against Iran as early as 1983.

To turn to biological weapons programme, Iraq unquestionably violated its obligations to hand over to the Special Commission all its biological-weapons-related items when, contrary to Security Council resolution 687 (1991), it destroyed buildings at its Salman Pak biological weapon research centre immediately prior to the first Commission inspection there. Moreover, after first maintaining that it had no biological weapons and that it had carried out no related activities, Iraq then acknowledged to inspectors that it had undertaken research which could have had offensive military applications. Lastly, although Iraq then claimed that its biological weapons research programme, which it said had begun in 1986, had ended in 1990, a Special Commission biological weapons inspection team found clear evidence, again at Salman Pak, of the capability to produce what it characterized as "vast quantities of biological agents."

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

In the area of ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres, Iraq initially declared 62 Scud missiles and Scud variants and five sites for production, maintenance, storage and deployment. Subsequent inspections revealed, however, that Iraq had misrepresented its inventory of ballistic missiles, components and facilities and had attempted to deceive inspectors and conceal missiles and related components from inspection teams. As but one in a long list of examples I could give the Council today, Iraq's original declaration did not include five types of ballistic missiles covered by resolution 687 (1991).

This pattern of concealment has continued, I am afraid to say, right down to the present day. For this I draw the Council's attention to the report of Executive Chairman Ekeus on his special mission to Baghdad of 21 to 23 February 1992, in which he notes that at the very moment he was being assured that Iraq had make all the required declarations and fulfilled its obligations, a ballistic missile inspection team found at two sites prohibited items that had not previously been declared. Iraq continues to try to deceive and evade.

In those February 1992 discussions with the Special Commission, Iraq stated it had already provided "all the necessary information" under resolution 687 (1991). Iraq's previous actions to the contrary make it impossible for us to believe now that such is true. The Special Commission Chairman could not but conclude that Iraq has given "no undertaking to provide such a full, final and complete disclosure". (S/23643, para. 21)

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

Even in the face of its unsatisfactory disclosure of information on its weapons of mass destruction programmes, destruction of some of these weapons has proceeded. Without full, final and complete disclosure, however, the inspectors will never know if all such weapons have been located and destroyed. More precisely, in the absence of full disclosure we shall all have to conclude that the destruction certainly cannot categorically be proved to be complete.

United Nations resolutions also call for the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of Iraq's production facilities for these weapons of mass destruction. The clearest example of Iraq's nuclear facilities is the Al-Atheer facility. United Nations inspection teams have found that Al-Atheer is a state-of-the-art facility expressly designed for producing nuclear weapons. Iraq's own progress report on Al-Atheer - seized by a United Nations inspection team in September 1991 - links Al-Atheer directly with Iraq's nuclear weapons programme. Al-Atheer can in no way be considered to have any purpose other than weapons making, and therefore should be immediately and completely destroyed.

Iraq has refused to destroy matèriel and ballistic missile production and repair facilities designated by the Special Commission in February. Iraq has argued that these missile production items can be used for other purposes, including, interestingly enough, the production of military missiles of ranges of less than 150 kilometres.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

Iraq has claimed that it can render these and similar facilities for producing weapons of mass destruction harmless by converting them to civilian use. Given Iraq's clear record of non-compliance with United Nations efforts to identify Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, however, Iraq must not be allowed the option to return these facilities to use for production of these awful weapons. Therefore, these facilities should be destroyed rather than merely converted.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

The critical point here is not whether facilities are capable of producing material for civilian use, but whether they are capable of being used for prohibited purposes. The Council continues to support the proposition that the Special Commission, and not Iraq itself, must and will determine which facilities are required under Security Council resolutions to be destroyed. This is not a matter for negotiations or haggling, but for a final determination by the Special Commission, which must be observed by Iraq.

Regarding Iraq's obligations under resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991) to agree unconditionally to implement the ongoing monitoring and verification plans, the Special Commission Chairman reported in February that Iraq had not provided such an agreement. The Council insists on the necessity of assuring the international community that Iraq will not reacquire these destabilizing weapons. There is no alternative to Iraqi acceptance and implementation of resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991).

Allow me now to turn to Iraq's other obligations under resolution 687 (1991).

On border issues, in August 1991 the Iraqi representative to the boundary Commission stated that Iraq rejected the work of the Commission. Iraq has nevertheless participated reluctantly in the work of the Commission. Iraq is obligated to accept the work of the Commission. Any statements by Iraq to the contrary are breaches of Iraq's obligations under resolution 687 (1991).

Also related to the border is the issue of five Iraqi border police posts located on the Kuwaiti side of the boundary line on the map used by the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), which UNIKOM has repeatedly

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asked Iraq to remove to its side of the border - and, indeed, 1,000 metres away from the line on the UNIKOM map - as previously agreed, which Iraq stil refuses to do.

On the return of property, although progress has been made in returning Kuwaiti property, much remains to be done, including the return of aircraft and surface-to-air missile systems taken from Kuwait by Iraq.

On the repatriation of Kuwaiti, Saudi and other third-country nationals, Iraq refuses to take action on investigating lists of missing detainees submitted by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. At a meeting in Riyadh in March 1991 of representatives from Iraq, Kuwait, France, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the United States, all the parties to that meeting, including Iraq, agreed to grant the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) all facilities necessary to enable the ICRC to gather information on the whereabouts of missing persons.

One full year later, Iraq has yet to agree to ICRC access to Iraqi prisons and places of detention. Nor has Iraq yet followed through on its agreement to publish in its media lists of missing persons or reported effectively on what tracing steps it is taking on individual inquiry files.

Iraq's response has been a series of unfulfilled promises. The latest series of such promises was made in a February 1992 letter to the Secretary-General, which declares that Iraq is prepared to talk to the ICRC representative in Baghdad about ICRC access to prisons and about publication of names of the missing. To add insult to injury, this Iraqi letter asserts that Iraq is now in compliance with paragraph 30 of resolution 687 (1991) as a result of those promises. Once again, Iraq has deliberately delayed any

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meaningful cooperation on this issue, displaying a totally callous and uncooperative attitude towards the plight of the missing and the suffering of their relatives.

Iraq has repeatedly criticized the Council for causing shortages of food, medicines and other essential civilian needs in Iraq, even though resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991) provide the means for Iraq to assure the provision and equitable distribution of such goods to all the Iraqi civilian population.

Paragraph 7 of resolution 706 (1991) also required Iraq to submit monthly statements of its gold and foreign currency holdings. Iraq has yet to submit its first report.

Not only has Iraq not taken advantage of the mechanism of resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991) to improve the welfare of the Iraqi population, but Baghdad persists in actions of repression against its civilian population, particularly in the predominantly Kurdish-inhabited areas of the north and in the predominantly Shi'a-inhabited areas of the south.

Grave international concern at Baghdad's brutal repression of its own civilian population led to the adoption of resolution 688 (1991) on 5 April 1991. This resolution condemned the repression and demanded its immediate end. Members of the Council will recall that indiscriminate Iraqi shelling of civilian populations and other military pressures on civilians had led to a massive exodus from northern Iraq to Turkey and Iran, threatening the international peace and security of the region. Resolution 688 (1991) also insisted that Iraq allow immediate access by international humanitarian organizations to all those in need of assistance in all parts of Iraq and to make available all necessary facilities for their operations.

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The Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur's 18 February 1992 report, the press and non-governmental organizations have all documented the economic embargo instituted by the Government of Iraq in October 1991 - and I am sorry to say still continuing to this day - on shipments of food, fuel and other essential humanitarian supplies to northern Iraq. This embargo, enforced by the Iraqi military, is both impeding United Nations relief operations and inflicting severe hardship on Iraqi civilians, as well as impeding their right to enter and leave the area. In addition, Iraqi citizens formerly resident in the Kirkuk area are not allowed to return to their homes and businesses.

Elements of the embargo include cutting off salary and pension payments to Iraqi civil servants in the north, curtailing rations to approximately half the level of what other Iraqi civilians receive, and reducing fuel deliveries to approximately 25 per cent of the pre-October 1991 level. Checkpoint guards on the roads leading to northern Iraq are reported to confiscate the smallest quantities of privately purchased food carried by civilians arriving at the checkpoints from the south.

It is ironic, and truly tragic, that the Government of Iraq should continue to issue distorted, fabricated and exaggerated claims about the alleged humanitarian impact of United Nations sanctions, sanctions which in no way restrict the flow of medicines, food and other essential humanitarian goods, while the Iraqi Government itself imposes an internal embargo consciously designed to deprive some selected Iraqi civilians of food, fuel, medicine and other essential supplies.

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The Iraqi Government continues to repress its predominantly Shi'a population in the south as well. As recently as December and January, the Iraqi military launched attacks on the "marsh Arabs", killing hundreds.

The Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur's report and the press have also documented repressive Iraqi Government practices against Shi'a religious and cultural institutions. The Government of Iraq apparently is waging a concerted attack against the Shi'a clergy by arresting them, "disappearing" them, imprisoning them and torturing them. Iraq has yet to reply to an inquiry from the Special Rapporteur about his November 1991 list of missing persons including Shi'a clergy. The Iraqis continue to keep the ill and aged Imam Khoie under house arrest and to deny him medical attention from outside specialists. In 1991 the shrine of Imam Hussain in Karbala was shelled, badly damaged and desecrated. The official Iraqi explanation that Shi'a "rebels" had defiled their holiest shrine defies credulity. Shi'a religious colleges and universities have been closed; Shi'a publications are prohibited or strictly censored; Shi'a religious leaders are prevented from traveling freely.

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More generally, Iraq's human rights record is abysmal. The Special Rapporteur's report of February 1992, a document circulated to members of the Council, as well as recent reports by private human rights organizations, catalogue a compendium of horrors. Much of the new evidence derives from the files, videotapes and documents of the Iraqi secret police and security forces themselves, which have in particular carefully recorded the regime's brutality against the Kurdish people.

Thus, the world is learning in detail of "Operation Anfal" - the forced relocations of thousands of Kurdish villagers in a deliberate Iraqi policy to erase 4,000 Kurdish villages from the face of the Earth. Already the Special Rapporteur has received more than 15,000 names of missing Kurds, which led him to conclude that it would be difficult to dismiss the Kurdish claim of some 182,000 disappeared persons. Grave diggers are giving evidence of the burying indiscriminately of executed persons in mass graves. This list of horrors goes on and on.

Iraq's continuing repression of its civilian population led the Special Rapporteur to conclude that the threat to international peace and security in reference to resolution 688 (1991) continues.

In conclusion, the Council has seen Iraqi promises of compliance over the past year. As the President of the Council stated in his opening statement, the Council demands and expects Iraqi actions to comply with Council resolutions. Without full and unconditional compliance, the chances of lifting sanctions are nil. The Iraqi delegation now has the opportunity to provide authoritative answers to our questions and authoritative declarations of unconditional acceptance of resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991) - indeed of all the resolutions. Even more important, Iraq now has the opportunity to

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show by its actions that it will carry out its obligations. We would welcome authoritative answers, declarations and, even more, actions.

Once again, the Council stands at a critical juncture in its consideration of restoring and maintaining international peace and security in the Gulf region. My Government and the Council will be watching closely Iraqi actions in the future. By disdaining and failing to comply with the Council's resolutions, Iraq risks making, as it has in the past, yet another tragic and fateful miscalculation, the full consequences of which the Government of Iraq will once again have to bear.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. LOZINSKY (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, Sir, allow me to welcome you to the post of President of the Security Council, and to express our satisfaction at the skill with which you have undertaken the guidance of its work. Moreover, on behalf of the delegation of the Russian Federation, I should like you to convey our gratitude to the Permanent Representative of the United States, Ambassador Pickering, for the great diplomatic art, professionalism and energy with which he so outstandingly guided the work of the Security Council in February.

A year has passed since that time when, through the efforts of the international community, on the basis of Security Council decisions, Iraq's aggression against Kuwait was halted. That aggression cost the lives of thousands of totally innocent Kuwaitis and citizens of other countries, and caused enormous material damage. In order to prevent the recurrence of such a criminal venture, the Security Council drew up a set of measures designed to ensure peace and stability in the region. However, as is pointed out in the

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President's introductory statement and in members' statements, the result of Iraq's refusal fully to abide by its obligations under the Council's resolutions is that an extremely dangerous situation now exists. The events of the last year indicate that the Iraqi leadership has yet to begin to cooperate with the Council and to implement all its decisions. Moreover, Iraq has recently been making efforts to review the implementation of those obligations, which it earlier had officially undertaken, so as to put off the preliminary conditions for the implementation of the various provisions of Security Council resolutions. Such conclusions stem in part from the results of the recent negotiations held in Baghdad between the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission, Ambassador Ekeus, and representatives of the Government of Iraq. The information submitted by the Special Commission demonstrates that until now Iraq has made no statement concerning its unconditional agreement to implement all its obligations under resolutions 687 (1991), 707 (1991) and 715 (1991) regarding the programme of ongoing monitoring and verification of its renunciation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles with a range exceeding 150 kilometres.

The information conveyed to the Security Council by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also demonstrates that the information submitted by the Iraqi side is not in keeping with the demands of the plan for the implementation of ongoing monitoring and verification. Moreover, the Iraqi technical specialists themselves were in agreement with this observation. In accordance with the demands contained in the Council resolutions, the Special Commission and the IAEA should receive from Iraq a comprehensive, final and complete picture of all aspects of the Iraqi programme for weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles with a range exceeding 150 kilometres.

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Iraq knows, of course, exactly what information must be submitted, as extensive demands in this regard were repeatedly submitted to it by the Special Commission. However, the virtual refusal by the Iraqi side to do so has been forcing the Special Commission and its inspection group to gather data in bits and pieces within the framework of the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

The inconsistency of repeated Iraqi statements to the effect that all the information demanded has already been submitted is reaffirmed by the constant discovery during inspections of new and undeclared components, which have a direct bearing on Iraqi programmes linked to activity banned under the various Council resolutions. A cause of serious concern for members of the Council are the obstacles created by the Iraqi authorities to the Special Commission's work, in particular, the recent case of Iraq's refusal to destroy, within the timetable laid down by the Special Commission, equipment relating to ballistic missiles. Incidentally, paragraph 9 of resolution 687 (1991) clearly demonstrates that such equipment must be destroyed and that Iraqi attempts to dispute this demand are unacceptable.

An unsatisfactory situation also exists concerning the implementation of other provisions of resolution 687 (1991). Thus, according to existing data, Iraq is continuing to detain more than 2,000 Kuwaitis and citizens of other countries, and the Iraqi authorities are not rendering necessary assistance to the International Committee of the Red Cross in its search for missing persons. They are not providing representatives of that organization with access to all the detainees and to all places of detention. There have been inadmissible delays in the process of the return by Iraq of seized Kuwaiti property, including military property.

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Another subject of particular concern is the repressive policy of the Iraqi authorities with regard to the civilian population of the country, in particular in those regions in which the Kurds live and in the south of the country, in violation of the provisions of Security Council resolution 688 (1991). Along with other members of the Council, we are particularly sensitive to the fact that, as indicated by the Secretary-General's Special Representative, the Iraqi Government has placed limitations on the supply of basic consumer goods to the northern part of the country. As a result, that region is receiving less than half of the usual deliveries of foodstuffs, and its population is experiencing serious deprivation. Particular note should be taken of the fact that more than six months ago the Council adopted resolutions 706 and 712 (1991), which provided Iraq with an opportunity to sell a certain quantity of oil to finance the purchase of foodstuffs, medicines and other materials for humanitarian needs. The Government of Iraq, however, refuses to avail itself of this opportunity. We can only express regret, therefore, that, while refusing to proceed to a full and genuine implementation of the Security Council's decisions, Baghdad should intensify the sufferings of the Iraqi people and block any mitigation of those sufferings.

A most disturbing situation in the field of human rights in Iraq is discussed in the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, and it has a direct bearing on the question of the implementation of Security Council resolution 688 (1991). The Special Rapporteur came to the unequivocal conclusion that the Government of Iraq is responsible for widespread and systematic violations of human rights of the most serious nature, namely, mass executions, torture and genocide. Moreover, as his

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report notes, there are no indications that the Iraqi Government intends to cease such practices.

We also believe it is important to emphasize the need for Iraq's unswerving implementation of all its other obligations, in particular those affecting the servicing and payment of its foreign debt, as provided in paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991).

We get the impression that Baghdad is still not fully aware of the great seriousness of what Iraq has done. For the first time since the Second World War, a half century ago, one State has occupied and annexed another sovereign State Member of the United Nations, brazenly violating its obligations under the United Nations Charter and the fundamental principles of international law. More, Iraq had drawn up and was beginning to implement a programme for the production of nuclear weapons and was making preparations to manufacture biological weapons in violation of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Convention banning bacteriological and toxic weapons. Iraq had threatened to use chemical weapons, and evidence of its use of such weapons in the past made those threats particularly ominous.

Carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to it by the United Nations Charter, the Security Council drew up and reaffirmed a programme of measures aimed at halting those actions, which were most threatening to international peace and security, and at preventing their recurrence. The vital interests of all United Nations Member States demand an immediate and unconditional implementation of that programme.

The Russian Federation unequivocally favours Iraq's return to the international community as a full-fledged member and the lifting of the

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economic sanctions placed upon it. However, to achieve that the Iraqi Government itself must realize the seriousness of what it has done, recognize its errors and draw the appropriate conclusions from the numerous statements and decisions of the Security Council. Instead of confrontation with the Council, Iraq must immediately and fully implement all of the Council's demands.

Such an outcome would answer to the interests of the whole of the international community and, to no less degree, to those of Iraq itself. There can be no other solution for the Iraqi leadership. We hope that the participation of the high-level Iraqi delegation in this meeting of the Security Council is evidence of the fact that Baghdad has finally become aware of the responsibility incumbent upon it and that it will begin to cooperate with the United Nations and, through its actions, reaffirm its intention fully and unconditionally to implement all the provisions of the Security Council resolutions that are binding upon it.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his very kind words addressed to me.

Mr. LI Daoyu (China)(interpretation from Chinese): First of all, please allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am confident that with your outstanding diplomatic skill and rich experience you will guide the work of the Council for this month to success. I should also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Pickering of the United States, who presided over the Council's work in an efficient and outstanding manner during the busy month of February. I should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate

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Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky for his assumption of the important post of Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Today, a year after the end of the Gulf War, it is necessary and useful for the Security Council to have a dialogue with the Iraqi delegation and to discuss the implementation of the Security Council resolutions and the various aspects of the post-war situation. China always favours dialogue over confrontation. We welcome the decision of the Iraqi Government to send its delegation to New York to talk with the Security Council. We hope that this dialogue will achieve positive results, help to realize the objectives contained in the relevant Security Council resolutions and contribute to the restoration of the long-hoped-for peace and stability in the Gulf region.

At the very beginning of the Gulf crisis China stated in unequivocal terms its principled position of resolute opposition to the Iraqi armed invasion of Kuwait. All along, we have stood for peaceful coexistence among all countries and the peaceful settlement of disputes. This constitutes one of the basic premises of China's proposal for the establishment of a new international political and economic order.

Over the past year, in order to remove the consequences of the invasion and to ensure peace and stability in the Gulf region, the international community has acted in cooperation, with fruitful results. The United Nations Secretary-General and the agencies concerned have also made valuable contributions to that end. We are pleased to note, as pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, that significant progress has been made in the implementation of some of the important parts of the resolutions. China, like other members of the Security Council, is of the view that the resolutions adopted by the Security Council remain essential to the

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restoration of peace and stability in the Gulf region and must be fully implemented. Since much remains to be done, we sincerely hope that Iraq will continue to cooperate with the parties concerned and earnestly fulfil its obligations set forth in the relevant resolutions.

Although the Gulf war was brought to an end a year ago, we have noticed with great anxiety that the difficult situation confronting the Iraqi people continues to deteriorate. China has always held that the Iraqi people are innocent and that it is not fair to prolong their sufferings and hardships. At the adoption of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), the Chinese delegation pointed out in its statement that:

> "we are in favour of immediate abolition of restrictions on imports into Iraq of foodstuffs and other goods required for the restoration of the people's normal life, and the timely and gradual lifting of other economic sanctions against Iraq in light of the development of the situation." (S/PV.2981, p. 97)

(Mr. Li Daoyu, China)

Our position remains unchanged. It is precisely out of humanitarian considerations that we supported the reasonable proposal - put forward by the coordinator of the non-aligned States members of the Security Council at the Committee established by Security Council resolution 661 (1990) - that the "no objection" procedure should be changed to a "simple notification" procedure in allowing Iraq to import civilian products. In our view, this will help alleviate the difficulties of the Iraqi people and be conducive to an early economic recovery in the countries of the region.

We hope that today's meeting will have a positive impact on the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, so that the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Gulf countries will be safeguarded and respected by the international community.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of China for his very kind words addressed to me.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): In August 1990, Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait, violating the sovereignty of that country and contravening international law. With that act of aggression, Iraq reaped the universal condemnation of the international community. Until Iraq perpetrated this aggressive action against its neighbour, Japan had enjoyed good relations with that country. I therefore all the more regret the course of events over the past year and a half.

The tragic consequences of Iraq's actions continue to be felt. Indeed, more than a year has passed since hostilities in the Gulf ended, but the people of Kuwait continue to suffer from the effects of Iraq's aggression in terms of human lives lost, material destruction, and environmental degradation. As the Kuwaiti people, with the assistance of the international

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

community, strive to rebuild their lives and their country, Iraq's responsibility for their suffering is not forgotten and the Iraqi leadership is held accountable for the consequences of its aggression. Regrettably, I am not sure if the Iraqi leadership fully understands the gravity of the present situation.

According to United Nations related documents, the Government of Iraq is persecuting the Kurdish people and Shiite groups within its territory. It continues to prevent the repatriation of large numbers of Kuwaiti nationals and refuses to return all Kuwaiti property. Moreover, it has repeatedly blocked the efforts of the Special Commission to oversee the destruction of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and has submitted false reports to the Council. In refusing to cooperate with the Council and to honour its resolutions, the Government of Iraq is demonstrating its defiance not only against the Council but also against the international community as a whole. Iraq's leaders must realize that they are not in a position to decide which provisions they will implement and which ones they will not. There is no room for negotiation.

Clearly, the Iraqi people must also be counted among the victims of their Government's aggressive actions and its refusal to implement the resolutions of the Security Council. My delegation is concerned for the innocent people of Iraq as they continue to face severe hardship. In this connection, the Security Council agreed to allow Iraq to sell oil so that it might provide for the basic needs of its people. But by refusing to export oil as laid out by the Council, and by creating obstacles to the activities of various agencies, the Government of Iraq is denying its own people access to the humanitarian relief that has been made available. Japan believes the Iraqi leadership has

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the moral obligation to alleviate the agony of its own people and that it can do so by exporting its own oil.

Japan again urges the Government of Iraq to agree once and for all to implement the provisions of all relevant Security Council resolutions. The Council has already made its position known that, if Iraq continues to make material breaches of its obligations, it will have serious consequences.

Japan does not want to see Iraq remain an outcast of the international community. Iraq and the Iraqi people have suffered enough. I remember how Japan suffered at the end of the last World War. But I also remember how Japan was helped by the international community represented by the United Nations. It is Japan's earnest hope that Iraq will soon be welcomed to the world community as a responsible member. But the only way - the only way - towards that goal is Iraq's compliance with all the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Mr. ERDOS (Hungary) (interpretation from French): A year ago, the forces of an international coalition pitted themselves against Iraqi aggression. They liberated Kuwait and thus re-established international legality by acting in accordance with the United Nations Charter. We would like the Government of the Republic of Iraq and its high-ranking representatives who are with us today to understand how a small country such as Hungary was jolted and distressed - through the implications of this act for international relations in general - at seeing a country not only invade another but then deny the very existence of that country and unabashedly proclaim the erasing from the global map of a country Member of the United Nations. Therefore, Hungary has expressed its full support for the measures taken by the Security Council since the outset of the Gulf crisis.

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

After the end of hostilities in the region, the Council in its numerous resolutions clearly and unambiguously determined those demands which Iraq would have to meet. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, the Members of the Organization agree to accept and implement decisions of the Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

The resolutions of the Council, therefore, cannot be viewed as a basis for negotiation, just as they cannot be the object of any kind of bargaining. Moreover, the President's statement at the end of the meeting of the Council at the level of Heads of State and Government in January reaffirmed that Security Council resolutions must be implemented in full.

We believe that dialogue is the most reasonable and most effective means for clarifying differences in points of view and for eliminating possible misunderstandings. We should like to make it clear, however, that this dialogue between the Security Council and Iraq cannot be a free-ranging discussion, and that its sole subject must be the implementation by Iraq of the relevant resolutions of the Council. We deeply deplore the fact that Iraq has not yet fully complied with them. We expect that the leaders of Iraq - through the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic - will give the Security Council clear guarantees to this effect.

The key resolution of the Council, resolution 687 (1991), is intended to lead to the re-establishment of security throughout the Gulf region. It was accepted, without reservations at the time, by the Iraqi National Assembly. Iraq's derelictions in implementing this vital resolution, its attempts to reinterpret some of its provisions - and those of subsequent resolutions of the Council dealing with Iraqi military capacity - are revealing of an attitude of which we strongly disapprove and which is legitimate cause for concern.

That being so, the provisions in question were drafted with the most scrupulous care, and Iraq's obligations under part C of resolution 687 (1991) can easily be defined beyond any possibility of doubt. However, up till now, Iraq has on many occasions been in violation of a good many of these

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

obligations. It had been so despite the fact that the Security Council had in the meantime adopted several other resolutions and had in various ways strongly condemned Iraq's practices in this area.

There is some indication from the most recent International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections that would seem to suggest a better understanding by Iraq of the need for a more cooperative attitude on their part. However, we are obliged to state that in general we can see no real change in Iraq's behaviour.

In the field of weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles with a range of more than 150 kilometres and nuclear programmes, the general picture which emerges through the Special Commission and the IAEA do not allow us to have a detailed, comprehensive overview of Iraqi programmes in these areas. As for the information required of it, Iraq is holding to its own particular interpretation, which is that it considers the information it supplies as being sufficient information. Events continue to show that this interpretation is patently false.

The attitude of the Iraqi side concerning the question of the destruction of materials and facilities to that end is as unsatisfactory. What we are seeing here is delaying tactics. It is up to those bodies authorized to do so by the Security Council to determine what Iraq must or must not destroy, and it will continue to be up to those bodies.

We believe that the only way to loosen the sanctions imposed on Iraq is for Iraq to implement the Council's resolutions in full. Iraq must be aware of the serious consequences of continuing its serious derelictions in this area.

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

We are well aware of the consequences of the economic blockade imposed in the north and south of Iraq by the Government of the Iraq itself. The attitude of the Iraqi Government is exposing the entire civilian population of the country to needless suffering. The economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations cannot affect supplies of food, medicines and other goods to meet the basic humanitarian needs of the civilian population of Iraq. As we are aware, Security Council resolutions specifically designed to relieve the suffering of the people of the country have established mechanisms designed to enable Iraq to purchase the basic necessities.

These purchases ought to be paid for out of the proceeds from the sale of a certain amount of Iraqi oil. That being the case, we do not believe that the Iraqi reference to "interference in its internal affairs" as justification for its refusal to engage in the sale of its oil is well founded, given the policy and practices that that country so recently pursued in the region. In this respect, we regret that Iraq has deemed it proper unilaterally to break off negotiations on this topic with the United Nations representatives in Vienna.

Similarly, it is because of the total lack of Iraqi cooperation that the question of compensation is still deadlocked. We also believe that it is important that Iraq should scrupulously honour all its obligations concerning the servicing and reimbursing of its foreign debt. A great deal remains to be done concerning the restitution of Kuwaiti property seized by Iraq.

Another subject of keen concern for Hungary is the human rights situation in Iraq. These rights continue to be violated; we note cases of summary execution, political assassination, torture, involuntary disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, suppression of the freedoms of thought,

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

expression and association, violations of the rights of ethnic and religious communities and so on.

Moreover, the Security Council has on many occasions expressed its deep concern about the repatriation of Kuwaitis and nationals of third countries in in Iraq. In this context, we believe that Iraq's derelictions in the area of cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are unacceptable. Given the exceptionally grave human rights situation in Iraq, it would, in our opinion, be a good moment to consider - in the appropriate United Nations forums - sending a human rights observer team to Iraq.

The delegation of Hungary hopes that the representatives of the Republic of Iraq present today at this meeting of the Security Council will be able to return to their country with a clear view of what the international community expects of their Government. Here, we are talking about nothing more nor less than the full and unconditional implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Council. We would venture to hope that the political message reflected in the various views expressed around this table will be heard, understood and taken at face value by the Iraqi leadership, which will help us all to come closer to the end of this sorry chapter in the post-cold-war period.

Mr. NOTERDAEME (Belgium) (interpretation from French): First, Sir, I should like to take this opportunity to welcome you as President of the Security Council. I assure you of my delegation's full cooperation. I also wish to congratulate Ambassador Pickering on the outstanding work he did over the past month and to thank him for it. Allow me also to say how much we appreciate the presence in the Council of Mr. Petrovsky and to thank his predecessor Mr. Safronchuk, with whom we worked so well.

Throughout the Gulf crisis Belgium's policy and objectives were based on respect for international law. The goal was to obtain the liberation of Kuwait, to avoid a recurrence of such aggression and to lead Iraq once again to play a positive role in the international community.

Kuwait was liberated and our Council laid down conditions for the cease-fire. Moreover, Iraq notified the Council of its unconditional acceptance of resolution 687 (1991), and that acceptance was reaffirmed by a decision of the Iraqi National Assembly.

Unfortunately, by its deeds Iraq continues to trample underfoot several provisions of resolution 687 (1991) and of other relevant resolutions of the Security Council. The Secretary-General's report is most eloquent in this respect.

Thus for our efforts concerning international law to remain credible the Council must see that Iraq strictly respects its obligations. I should like to add that this firm attitude does not make us unaware of the plight of the Iraqi population held hostage by its own Government.

To achieve the objectives that the Council has set, the Iraqi Government must therefore respect all its international obligations. I am thinking specifically of three areas.

First, Iraq must remedy the ravages which its aggression has caused. The

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

liberation of Kuwait by the legitimate use of armed force was not sufficient to avoid the consequences of a brutal and bloody occupation consisting of pillage, destruction and extortion. That was why there was a need to impose on Iraq a number of measures linked to the exchange of prisoners and the return of property stolen from Kuwait. Moreover, the establishment of a compensation fund would seem to be an essential innovation, designed to obtain from Iraq a just contribution to making good the damage resulting from the invasion and illegal occupation of Kuwait.

Secondly, Iraq must fully and unconditionally dismantle its potential for mass destruction. It was the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction by Iraq and the intransigent and warlike attitude of the Baghdad authorities that forced the Security Council to establish disarmament machinery and a military embargo against Iraq. Belgium hopes that the implementation of those measures will be a first step towards re-establishing international peace and security throughout the region.

Thirdly, the Government of Iraq must respect human rights. Here I should like to note my Government's great concern on reading the report on the human rights situation in Iraq prepared by Mr. van der Stoel, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights. The information we have received over the past few months concerning the brutal armed repression by the Iraqi regime of its population and the discriminatory measures applied to certain groups add to our concern.

During the consideration by the General Assembly of the situation in the Middle East the States members of the European Community once again repeated, in their statement of 26 November 1991, their concerns in this respect. As long as those violations of human rights continue Iraq will still be far from having effectively fulfilled its international obligations.

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

Belgium's sharing in the Council's firm position does not mean that my country is insensitive to the suffering of the Iraqi people, who have unfortunately been held hostage by their own authorities since the beginning of the crisis. Belgium has always emphasized the need to grant humanitarian assistance to the population of Iraq, regardless of any other considerations. That is why we welcomed the provisional lifting of the food embargo by the Committee on sanctions. We were then pleased by its final lifting through the adoption of resolution 687 (1991). We have worked constantly for the effective maintenance of the policy of extending a hand to the population of Iraq.

Based on the same humanitarian concern, Belgium supported resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991), which allow Iraq to acquire revenue needed to finance its food and humanitarian imports. A few days ago Belgium supported the adoption in the Committee on sanctions of a gentlemen's agreement which should allow for even more flexible and rapid consideration of requests concerning a series of products.

Thus the Iraqi Government has available the means for improving the humanitarian situation of its population. It is up to that Government, and to it alone, to use them or not to use them. My country therefore urgently calls on it to take advantage of those two resolutions.

Having the necessary resources, the Iraqi Government would then also have responsibility for guaranteeing the fair distribution of food and humanitarian products to the Iraqi population as a whole, without any discrimination. Unfortunately, we must note that that is not always the case and that entire sections of the Iraqi population are disadvantaged. We expect Iraq to put an end to these discriminatory practices.

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

While the most recent information is that there has been a general improvement in the food situation, it also confirms the existence of an economic blockade imposed on the north of Iraq, as a result of which the Kurdish population of Iraq is receiving only half the daily rations distributed in the rest of the country. This unacceptable situation must end.

In this context, the United Nations security officials in Iraq are making an invaluable contribution to the work both of humanitarian agencies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations. My delegation pays tribute to them. We shall regard extending their mandate as one of the guarantees of the Iraqi Government's good intentions.

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

The policy pursued so far by the Iraqi authorities has for us been only a source of deep distrust. It is therefore now up to the Iraqi Government to dispel this distrust by formal and clear commitments demonstrated through specific acts. Belgium hopes that the present meeting of the Security Council will be an opportunity for Iraq finally to undertake the commitments flowing from the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Belgium for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. AYALA LASSO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): May I first congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We know that you will be leading our work to a successful conclusion.

I wish also to express my congratulations to Ambassador Thomas Pickering of the United States of America on the excellent work he did as President of the Security Council in February.

The position that Ecuador has adopted in analysing the Gulf crisis - which began when Kuwait was invaded and annexed militarily by Iraq - has been based on strictest respect for the principles and rules of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. These include the use of exclusively peaceful methods for resolving disputes; condemnation of the use of force against the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States; non-recognition of territory acquired through the use of force; and in particular the shared obligation to contribute to the establishment of a peaceful and more just and free world. The only and final objective of all this is to meet the all-important aspirations of human beings.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

Using its authority under the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council adopted a series of resolutions setting out obligations with which Iraq had to comply completely and unconditionally. Resolution 687 (1991) contains the largest number of aspects deemed essential for solving the problems created by the invasion of Kuwait. One of these aspects relates to weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological and nuclear. There can be no doubt in this respect that the work entrusted to the Special Commission has been carried out - despite the contradictory initial attitudes and the concealment on the part of Iraq - with greater magnitude in respect of the destruction of these weapons. The Commission has reported positive progress, which the Security Council must also recognize. None the less, it will be necessary for Iraq to broaden its cooperation in all areas related to the presentation of plans and programmes that it has prepared and that exist in this respect, as required by the Special Commission.

There are obligations that stem from the resolutions of the Security Council whose implementation requires specific action; there are other obligations that, in order to be implemented, require ongoing, permanent conduct. Ecuador believes that compliance with the Security Council's mandates must be complete and without any exceptions. We recognize that by its very nature such compliance cannot in every case be verified immediately. Nevertheless, it will be up to the Council to evaluate the correct implementation of its resolutions, taking into account the good faith that Iraq must demonstrate.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

Ecuador, like the Security Council as a whole, has shown constant concern at the plight of the Iraqi population - the population in the large cities as well as the minorities in the north and south of Iraq. Out of humanitarian concerns, Ecuador has supported the taking of measures by the Council to help meet the extreme needs of the Iraqi population. My country will continue to support any initiative with that objective. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the way most conducive to ensuring that result will be, as has been shown in practice, compliance by the Iraqi Government with all the resolutions of the Security Council. Furthermore, Iraq must make use of the mechanisms provided in resolutions 688 (1991), 706 (1991) and 712 (1991).

For the same humanitarian reasons, we are extremely concerned at the situation of lack of respect for human rights in Iraq. The report submitted in this respect by Mr. Max van der Stoel is so eloquent that it should give us cause for reflection and should prompt Iraq to take immediately the required corrective measures. Among the obligations that Iraq must fulfil is to facilitate and carry out the repatriation of Kuwaiti nationals and nationals of other countries. We hope that the next meeting, which will be held with the participation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, will produce better results than those we have seen so far.

We regard as highly useful Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz's visit to the Security Council. This is a positive sign of his cooperation with the United Nations. We do not categorize his visit as a negotiation mission - that would not be fitting - but, rather, as an opportunity for dialogue for

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

hearing Iraq's opinions and considerations. Ecuador feels that this dialogue can help to make the picture clear and find specific solutions to the problems we all wish to see solved.

We hope to receive from Mr. Tariq Aziz first-hand information, satisfactory responses to the points raised by the President of the Security Council on behalf of all the members. Above all, we hope that the Iraqi Government will wish to adopt measures that will make it feasible for the Security Council to react immediately, in the context of the sanctions applied to Iraq, to restore normalcy in the region, as regards both the plight of the Iraqi population and respect for the rules of law. Only in this way will it be possible to restore peace, security and justice, following the tragic conflict in the Gulf.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Ecuador for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. GHAREKHAN (India): May I begin by felicitating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. You bring to this high office a wealth of experience that I am confident will materially contribute to the success of the Council's activities.

I should like also to place on record my delegation's deep appreciation for the outstandingly professional and energetic manner in which the Permanent Representative of the United States, Ambassador Pickering, presided over the Council's work last month.

May I also extend a word of welcome to our new Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Petrovsky.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

Some of my colleagues will recall that when the Council adopted resolution 687 (1991) last year it similarly met during the month of Ramadan and sat through the lunch period. It is appropriate that, as we take stock of resolution 687 (1991) today, we once again sit through the lunch break during the holy month of Ramadan.

Today's meeting is a special one. It endeavours to address issues that emerged during and after the upheavals of late 1990 and early 1991 in the Gulf region. Between August 1990 and mid-1991, the Security Council convened in a series of meetings that created a framework of action in response to the Gulf crisis and its aftermath. Kuwait has not only regained its sovereignty and independence, but has also started active participation in international political and economic exchanges. We are now meeting to take stock of what has happened since then and of what more needs to be done.

Resolution 687 (1991), as we all know, is a landmark decision of the Council. Subsequent Council resolutions have gone into this or that aspect of the crisis, but resolution 687 (1991) is the basic document. It is important to note that Iraq, and the international community as a whole through the Security Council's agreed decisions, have accepted that resolution and must come together in an attempt to preserve and strengthen international peace and security. Needless to say, all countries committed to the Council's decisions in this regard assume the responsibility to comply with and implement them.

In my delegation's view, therefore, one basic premise of today's exercise is respect for and full implementation of Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter on this particular issue.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

It is not my intention to go into the details of the very important issue we are examining today since we already have authoritative documentation on the subject. The Council has before it the Secretary-General's report of 25 January 1992 (S/23514) on the extent of Iraq's compliance with the obligations placed upon it by the relevant Council resolutions, as well as his further report dated 7 March 1992 (S/23687). I should like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his detailed and informative reports, which indeed are the only basis on which the Security Council can and should conduct its work. Both reports identify areas where such compliance has either been achieved or actively pursued and areas where compliance is yet to be achieved. My delegation has taken note of the assessment contained in the Secretary-General's report that significant progress has been achieved in respect of section C of resolution 687 (1991), but that much remains to be done. What remains also must be implemented. The necessity of compliance with all mandatory provisions of the resolution, which are inherently integral, has been underlined by the Council on numerous occasions.

In our task we are assisted by the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Tariq Aziz, and his colleagues. His long experience at the highest levels of his country's Government provides the Council with a unique opportunity to find the answers and commitments it seeks. My delegation, and I am sure the Security Council as a whole, appreciate his willingness to be present here and engage in a constructive exchange of views.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

A second basic premise, in my delegation's reckoning, should be humanitarian. The Council is aware of the uncontestable and well documented hardships suffered by innocent civilians in Iraq. The non-aligned members of the Council have repeatedly stressed the need for a humanitarian approach in this regard. I must record my delegation's disappointment at the meagre progress achieved in this area. The Council has yet to accept formally the proposal of the non-aligned members that items of undeniable humanitarian need be transferred from the "no objection" procedure to the "notification" category. I trust none the less that today's meeting will lead to early, meaningful Council action to address the urgent humanitarian context.

An issue of importance in addressing the humanitarian aspects of this crisis - or indeed any other crisis that invokes Security Council action under Chapter VII of the Charter - is the operation of Article 50 of the Charter. My delegation, on several occasions, has reiterated the need to strengthen the overall impact and influence of Council action by the activation, in concrete terms, Article 50, enabling countries that faithfully implement Council resolutions to obtain redress wherever such implementation adversely affects them.

I shall make one final point. Today's meeting, I hope, will dwell upon the possibility and the means of achieving what the international community aspires to in the Gulf region and around the world, namely peace and prosperity for all. Our aim is to overcome divergences in views and misunderstandings, and to promote trust and cooperation. Today's opportunity

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

of a dialogue with the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq should serve precisely these purposes and open the doors to early, peaceful resolution of all outstanding problems in the Gulf.

India's relations with Gulf countries have been marked through the centuries by good will and cooperation. That explains why my country fervently hopes that the international community can work together to put the grim and sad chapter of the Gulf conflict behind it and strive towards the fulfilment of ideals that the Charter of the United Nations seeks to achieve. If we can bring about such a turn of events we shall have learnt the most valuable lesson of all the lessons emerging from the Gulf crisis.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of India for the kind words he addressed to me and for noting the importance of Ramadan, which is the reason for extending this morning's meeting.

Mr. BARBOSA (Cape Verde): I would like to start, Sir, by congratulating you on your assumption of the Council presidency. I am sure that during your mandate much will be accomplished by the Council under your skilful leadership.

I would like to convey my congratulations to your predecessor, Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering, for the very able and efficient manner in which he conducted the deliberations of the Council last month.

Cape Verde strongly believes in the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force in international relations. As a small country, we are very much against any violation of those principles and

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

against the violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of any country. That is why we strongly condemned the invasion of Kuwait last year and shared the international community's outrage at Iraq's unprovoked aggression against that defenceless small country.

As a consequence of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which caused damage to the country and loss of life and property to the population of Kuwait and which posed a threat to security in the area, the Council adopted a series of resolutions imposing sanctions against Iraq and prescribing measures to reverse the aggression and redress the damages and pain that had been caused.

We believe that this Council, in imposing sanctions against Iraq, took a position proper and adequate to reestablish the peace and security of Kuwait and to impose respect for the rule of law, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

We ascribe the utmost importance to the need to implement the resolutions adopted by the Council in this respect. We have been following the various reports of the Secretariat on the status of the implementation by Iraq of the resolutions on sanctions.

While we have taken note of reports on Iraq's partial implementation of certain aspects of the resolutions, we regret to say that, in general, that country has fallen short of complying fully with the Council's decisions.

Your assessment, Sir, of the status of the implementation of Security Council decisions is a clear demonstration of Iraq's failure to comply fully with the Council's resolutions. We fully share your assessment, and would like to appeal to the Government of Iraq to be more forthcoming in its acceptance and compliance with the relevant Security Council decisions.

We are particularly sensitive to the situation of Kuwaiti prisoners and of nationals of third countries in Iraq. We expect Iraq to be more cooperative in order to obtain their release and facilitate access to them.

We would very much like to see this meeting as the first step of a process that would further promote the implementation of the Council's resolutions. We believe that full and complete compliance with the resolutions would go a long way towards facilitating the lifting of sanctions and reestablishing peace and cooperation in the area. We are aware of the painful situation in which the brotherly people of Iraq is living as a result of the United Nations sanctions. We are very sensitive to their needs, and we expect soon to see progress in compliance with the Security Council resolutions so that the living conditions of the Iraqi people can be eased. In this context, we are of the view that the Council should continue to be sensitive to the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi population.

We are not and will never be against the people of Iraq. However, we are

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

in favour, and very much so, of strict observance of the Charter provisions.

While we call for Iraq's compliance with the Security Council resolutions, we are also sensitive to the legitimate needs of its people. The economic development of Iraq should not therefore be unduly affected so as to preserve its peaceful civilian economic capacity.

The purpose of the sanctions against Iraq is to restore the situation as it existed before the invasion of Kuwait, to repair the damages and losses suffered and to create a situation that would guarantee peace and security in the area without unnecessarily affecting the economic structure and the future well-being of the Iraqi people.

Finally, we would like to express the wish that the presence of the Iraqi high-level delegation here today will be the beginning of a dialogue that promotes better understanding, facilitates the full and complete implementation of the Council's resolutions and eventually restores normalcy in Kuwait and Iraq for the benefit of the two sisterly countries and their respective people.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Cape Verde for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. MUMBENGEGWI (Zimbabwe): Let me begin, Sir, by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. Your well-known diplomatic skills will no doubt enable us to deal effectively with the onerous matters before the Council this month.

I should also like to congratulate Ambassador Pickering of the United States for the excellent way in which he conducted the Council's business during the month of February.

Moreover, I should like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Petrovsky,

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

with whom we will be working, on the assumption of his duties as Under-Secretary-General, and also to thank his predecessor, Mr. Safronchuk, for the very good work he did during his term of office.

We welcome in our midst Deputy Prime Minister Aziz of Iraq and his delegation. The offer by the Government of Iraq to have this high-level delegation give a first-hand explanation of the progress, problems and policies attendant on Iraq's implementation of, and compliance with, Security Council resolutions is indeed welcome. As members of the Security Council, we consider it imperative that Council resolutions should be complied with without reservation.

Recent history has demonstrated the Council's determination to enforce such compliance and has given us reason to hope that the collective will of the international community to right wrongs and protect the vulnerable is on the ascendancy. The Security Council's authority and credibility, as well as its moral stature can only be enhanced if the principle of enforcement of Security Council resolutions is applied uniformly and consistently regardless of who the offender might be.

The Council has before it the Secretary-General's updated report on the extent of Iraq's compliance with Security Council resolutions. We are very grateful to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and factual report.

We sincerely hope that Deputy Prime Minister Aziz and his delegation will be able to explain to the Council the reasons for delays in implementing the relevant resolutions, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report.

Of great concern to us is the humanitarian situation in the region, a cause of which we have seized the Council on previous occasions. Following

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

the adoption of resolution 687 (1991) and its unconditional acceptance by Iraq last year, we had hoped that normalcy would be speedily and smoothly restored to the Gulf area so that the people of the region would be spared further suffering. My delegation is deeply concerned that almost a year after the end of the war, the serious humanitarian situation in the region shows no signs of diminishing. We need not remind the Council of its moral obligation to do all in its power to ease the suffering of the civilian population in the region. The Iraqi authorities too must carry out their responsibility in this regard.

In this connection, we are deeply concerned about the as yet unresolved question of missing Kuwaiti nationals, as disclosed in the report dated 16 January 1992 of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The provisions of the Geneva Conventions and resolution 687 (1991) clearly impose upon Iraq an obligation to release all Kuwaiti nationals in its custody and to do so expeditiously in cooperation with the ICRC. We call upon Iraq to cooperate fully, to provide the ICRC with information relating to the missing persons, to facilitate searches by the ICRC and to accede to requests by the ICRC to undertake searches for the missing persons in accordance with ICRC norms and practices.

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

My delegation will be listening very carefully to Deputy Prime Minister Aziz's message and explanations and will be looking forward to a constructive and fruiful discussion by the Council on the basis of his statement.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Zimbabwe for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. SNOUSSI (Morocco)(interpretation from French): Allow me, first, to express my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and to tell you that we have already had occasion to appreciate your outstanding human qualities and your effectiveness as a diplomat. I should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Pickering for his work as President during the month of February and for the spirit of friendship and cooperation with which he imbued our work.

I should also like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Tariq Aziz and the Iraqi delegation accompanying him. By inviting them to participate in its work the Council wished to give that country an opportunity to inform it personally and at first hand of the reasons for all the delays and all the problems that are being experienced in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Council also wished to give them an opportunity to speak to it of the efforts that country is making to meet the commitments and obligations it undertook following the war. As an Arab country and as a member of the larger international community, my country has suffered cruelly from the fratricidal crisis in the region, and we deplored and will continue to deplore the cataclysm that followed upon that great catastrophe. The Arab community is eager to see peace of heart and mind return to the region.

(Mr. Snoussi, Morocco)

By inviting the Iraqi delegation to come here to join in its deliberations, the Security Council has attempted to demonstrate both its vigilance and also its readiness and willingness to listen. Indeed, the various United Nations bodies that have gone to Iraq have reported many shortcomings in that country's implementation of Security Council resolutions. However, Iraq, for its part, maintains that a large number of those resolutions have in fact been implemented. The Council has wished to demonstrate that it is not a mere unfeeling machine and that it is not unaware of the human component and existing human needs and of the difficulties created by the war, which put so many families in a state of mourning.

Although at this juncture it is up to the Iraqi Government to demonstrate to us its will to ensure the strict implementation the Council's resolutions, it is also incumbent upon to the Security Council to give due importance to the humanitarian needs of the innocent civilian population of Iraq, as was noted in the statement made at the conclusion of the Council's summit meeting of 31 January 1992 and contained in document S/23500.

The President's statement today was also clear, precise and relevant. It obviously represents the best possible programme of work for the Council and should make it possible for the Iraqi delegation to provide through its answers evidence of that country's will to implement the Council's resolutions and, at the same time, to express its concerns and its problems.

As the representative of India noted, the month of Ramadan is a month of abstinence. At the same time, however, it is a month of prayer. Let us hope that this meeting will provide an opportunity to recreate a true peace so that our Iraqi brothers may leave with the sense that the Council has listened to them calmly, constructively and objectively and that the Council for its part may be persuaded that is dealing with country that is responsible, a country

(Mr. Snoussi, Morocco)

that is honouring its commitments and that is determined to work towards peace and harmony.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Morocco for the kind words he addressed to me.

I should now like to make a statement in my capacity as representative of Venezuela, after which I will call upon Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq.

Venezuela views as highly significant the fact that His Excellency Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, is present in the Security Council today. Iraq is a State Member of the United Nations, and it is important to emphasize that it can and must make use of all of the Organization's forums designed to implement the United Nations Charter. We therefore welcome the initiative Iraq has taken to establish a direct dialogue with the Council.

In participating in this discussion, Venezuela cannot fail to note that that the cause of the crisis we are discussing today is the sole and entire responsibility of the Government of Iraq, which, in violation of the norms and principles of international law, invaded militarily and annexed to its territory the neighbouring State of Kuwait and then proceeded to devastate that State.

We are confident that with this meeting the Council is entering upon an exhaustive consideration of Iraq's obligations. We have the collective responsibility to make of this meeting an opportunity to make constructive progress to ensure that these obligations are carried out, and it is important to emphasize here that the decision in this respect is almost exclusively up to the Iraqi authorities. We believe that Iraq must carry out the

(The President)

obligations imposed upon it by the Security Council, obligations which Iraq has unconditionally pledged to implement fully.

I would note here and deplore the fact that Iraq has thus far not had recourse to the option of selling oil to help feed its population, which is suffering unnecessarily from Iraq's refusal to do so, a refusal that is totally contrary to the basic interests of its own people. Above and beyond this humanitarian appeal, I should like to express Venezuela's hope that Iraq will meet all its international obligations as soon as possible in order that its people will once again be able to aspire to the economic and social development to which they are fully entitled.

We consider it a priority and urgent matter that, over and above complying with the Council's decisions with respect to disarmament, Iraq fully satisfy the compensations required, particularly those in respect of Kuwait. It must also fulfil its obligations with regard to persons who have disappeared, to property and to boundary delimitations as soon as possible. We are also confident that the Government of Iraq will understand its humanitarian responsibilities to ensure the national reconciliation of its people with full respect for the human rights of all its citizens, many of whom are now subjected to untold and unjustifiable violations of such rights.

Lastly, I should like to reiterate Venezuela's interest in seeing as soon as possible international peace and security restored and a return of harmony among all friendly countries of the region with which my own country has relations and shared interests. To that end, Venezuela deems it essential that Iraq unconditionally fulfil the decisions of the Council, which have been reiterated today by the presidency of the Council and by the representatives who have spoken before me.

(The President)

Iraq, which will also speak here today in the Council, has in its hands and through its actions and decisions the final responsibility for normalizing its relations with the world here symbolized by the United Nations Security Council.

I now resume my functions as President. The next speaker is the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Tariq Aziz, and I now call upon him.

Mr. AZIZ (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): This is our first opportunity at this level to submit our point of view before the Security Council in respect of the Council's dealing with Iraq.

Military force was used against Iraq during the period from 17 January to 28 February 1991 under the umbrella of resolution 678 (1990), adopted by the Security Council on 28 November 1990. Indeed, even after the cessation of military operations, some formations of our armed forces continued to receive air strikes, such as those of 2 March 1991.

The whole world knows the way in which this resolution has been implemented to inflict, in a deliberate manner, a total destruction of the civilian infrastructure of Iraq: the roads, bridges, power plants, water-treatment plants, civilian factories - including an infant-milk factory - dams and communication centres. In addition to all of this, there was the damage and destruction inflicted on the civilian population, their properties and their residential centres; on mosques, churches, schools and colleges; hospitals and medicine stores; civilian shelters and foodstuff storage buildings.

The facts of the terrible, full-scale and iniquitous destructions are now known to all fair-minded people in the world. Dozens of books and reports have been published on the subject, many documentary films made, and several symposia held in various parts of the world, including this city. I quote here Ambassador Martti Ahtisaari, an Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, who visited Baghdad from 10 to 17 March 1991 and wrote a report on his visit. The report was forwarded by the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council with a letter dated 30 March 1991. Ambassador Ahtisaari wrote:

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

"Most means of modern life support have been destroyed or rendered tenuous. Iraq has, for some time to come, been relegated to a pre-industrial age". (S/PV.22366, para. 8)

Not only we but also members of the Security Council, including permanent members, have said that the operations of destruction carried out had gone beyond the framework of resolution 678 (1990), which became a political tool used to destroy a free, independent country.

However, members of the Council are aware that Iraq informed the Council on 28 February 1991 of its acceptance to comply fully with resolution 660 (1990) and all the other resolutions of the Security Council. Then came resolution 686 (1991) on 2 March 1991. That resolution contained a fundamental principle confirmed by the Council stating a reaffirming of the commitment of all Member States to Iraq's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Having adopted this resolution, the Council went on to formulate the grounds and measures necessary for an official cease-fire to be declared. Resolution 687 (1991) was then adopted on 3 April 1991. This resolution set out measures and conditions that were without precedent in the entire history of the United Nations, for these measures and conditions transcended by a large degree the initial limits and declared objectives of the Council's previous resolutions. As an independent sovereign State, Iraq stated its views on this resolution on the basis of the United Nations Charter, international law and the principles of fairness and justice. However, the Iraqi Government accepted the resolution in order to ward off the dangers threatening the people of Iraq.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

More than 11 months have elapsed since resolution 687 (1991) was adopted, during which time Iraq has seriously endeavoured to implement its provisions. I wish to point out in this respect that the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs sent, on 23 January 1992, a comprehensive letter in which he demonstrated in an objective manner supported by evidence the extent to which Iraq had implemented the provisions of the resolution. The contents of that letter, which I hope all members have read in depth, make clear that the fundamental contents of the resolution had already been implemented.

While I request that the contents of the comprehensive letter of the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs to which I have referred be seen as a part connected to the contents of the present statement on the Council's assessment of the situation, I should like to focus in some detail on certain aspects of the subject which, since last summer, have often been the source of problems and allegations thrown at Iraq without careful examination.

The weapons which Iraq is prohibited from possessing have been totally destroyed. Whatever remains, especially in the missiles and chemical ammunition fields, is being successively destroyed under the supervision of the inspection teams and according to a plan about which there is no argument between the Iraqi authorities concerned and these teams. As to the equipment used or allegedly used to produce those weapons, it has all been identified, for the inspection teams have visited all the factories and sites they wanted to visit, saw the equipment there, examined it and marked it with labels, thus ensuring their non-use henceforth.

From April 1991 to February 1992, 29 inspection teams visited Iraq with an overall membership of nearly 400 inspectors, who spent a total of 240 days in the country - that is, about 8 months of continuous work, during which the

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inspection teams conducted 415 inspection operations, including 127 surprise visits made without notice to locations spread all over Iraq and for which they used the most advanced and sophisticated means of detection, communication, reconnaissance and transport, including helicopters used for conducting large-scale aerial surveys over many plants of Iraq. The number of survey operations conducted with these planes was about 45, while the number of flights made for this and other purposes was about 120, each flight lasting between four and 8 hours.

During this period, too, United States U2 reconnaissance planes conducted 32 operations over Iraq. The aerial survey and reconnaissance operations conducted by these planes took an average of three to four hours each.

The various inspection teams have supervised 40 operations of destruction of missile systems, chemical weapons, equipment and their accessories. The items already destroyed under the supervision of the inspection teams have reached a total of around 14,000. These have ranged from half-manufactured parts to missiles and rocket launchers, from machines and equipment to empty chemical ammunition shells.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

In addition, the Iraqi side has destroyed more than 270,000 items - I repeat, 270,000 items - ranging from parts and pieces to machines and equipment, the remains of which have been examined by the inspection teams. More than 1,500 tons of raw materials have also been destroyed.

The number of the various machines and equipment which the inspection teams have put their seals on and prevented from being moved has reached nearly 1,000, in addition to what was destroyed during the military operations, which left none of the locations of the said activities without great damage inflicted on their buildings and equipment.

The clear conclusion with which one is left from all this is that Iraq is no longer in possession of any weapons, munitions or major or minor systems prohibited by resolution 687 (1991). The equipment used, or allegedly used, in producing such items has been identified, and its use has either been frozen or converted to civilian industries or industries not prohibited by resolution 687 (1991). All this is taking place under the supervision of the inspection teams. This fundamental fact has been deliberately hidden from the Council with a view to keeping it in a climate of suspicion as to the position of Iraq.

Let me now address a second matter, which has also been used as a pretext to raise doubts and ill-intended allegations against Iraq; I mean by that the Kuwaitis detained in Iraq. Since 4 March 1991, the Iraqi authorities concerned have repatriated, in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 6,520 Kuwaitis and third-country nationals. There are now in Iraq 3,594 Kuwaitis who are not detainees there, but live in freedom and are registered with the ICRC office in Baghdad. However, the Kuwaiti authorities have agreed to the return of only 468 of them. It is worth

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mentioning that while the Kuwaiti authorities, which have submitted a list containing 2,242 persons claimed to be in Iraq, 233 of these are proven to have been returned to Kuwait through the ICRC and 59 of them remain in Iraq awaiting approval from the Kuwaiti authorities for their return.

We have stated our position on this matter to the Council more than once, as well as to the League of Arab States, from which we received an envoy who came to see the facts of the situation. The false allegation, however, that Iraq is holding Kuwaiti individuals as detainees continues to be bandied about by certain Governments, which are not bothering to ask themselves the obvious question: Why should Iraq do this thing? And I wish to ask: What benefit would Iraq expect to gain from detaining one or two thousand Kuwaiti citizens, when Iraq has already repatriated high-ranking Kuwaiti officers and other high officials, including 20 members of the ruling family in Kuwait?

In order to remove any vagueness or equivocation and reach the truth, we addressed an official note to the ICRC, on 20 February 1992, in which we requested that this whole matter be entrusted to the ICRC to take whatever measures it deems appropriate in order to determine the facts. I have been informed here that implementation of these procedures with the ICRC has begun: the newspapers in Iraq began publication of this fact in three newspapers, on 10 March, and this will be repeated once a week for four weeks running.

The same thing goes for the subject of properties. We have submitted inventories, expressed willingness to return the items, and have indeed returned very many items and huge quantities of property. That there are other items to be returned is not a responsibility of Iraq; rather, it is the responsibility of the Secretary-General's delegate entrusted with taking the

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

measures required for the properties to be received from Iraq, which has reiterated its readiness to cooperate and facilitate the task.

While I find it sufficient to mention these matters in relation to the provisions of resolution 687 (1991), I wish to reaffirm that Iraq, as is clearly stated in the letter of the Foreign Minister of Iraq to which I have referred, has indeed fulfilled the greatest and most fundamental part of the provisions of the resolution in relation to the other matters addressed in sections A, B, D and H of the resolution. The implementation of the remaining provisions, which by their nature require a period of time to be fully implemented, is being carried out in the proper manner, and Iraq is extending serious and professional cooperation in order to achieve such implementation.

Paragraph 21 of resolution 687 (1991) stipulates that the Security Council review the provisions of paragraph 20, which provides for the continuation of the embargo in light of the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Council, in order that the Council should determine whether to ease or lift the sanctions referred to in the said paragraph. The Council has continued, since it conducted its first review of Iraq's compliance in June 1991, to declare after each review that Iraq had not yet fully complied with the resolution, which meant that the embargo upon Iraq remained in place and that the sufferings of 18 million Iraqis continued unmitigated.

We have sent many notes and letters to the Council, and our Permanent Representative has spoken repeatedly before the Council explaining Iraq's position and the extent of its fulfilment of the provisions of resolution 687 (1991), but all these efforts have been ignored under pressure from a

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

small, but influential and perhaps even tyrannical, number of members of the Council. Now and again, storms of false allegations and ill-intended extremist conclusions have been raised against Iraq's position on one subject or another. The Council was repeatedly put in an atmosphere of distortion aimed at suggesting non-compliance by Iraq with the provisions of the resolution. Some members of the inspection teams visiting Iraq have been selected from people linked to the intelligence services of certain countries in order to create problems and hence keep the Council in this atmosphere of distortion.

I wish here to remind the Council that the first steps in implementing resolution 687 (1991) were taken during the weeks and months immediately following the cessation of the military operations, when Iraq was suffering bitterly from the impact of the total destruction which had left the country without electricity, communications or transport, and had resulted in the destruction of its buildings and documents and in other damages, caused by tens of thousands of tons of explosives dropped all over Iraq. None of the parties adopting the resolution has attempted to show any understanding of, or sympathy with, the terrible, tragic situation forced upon Iraq.

A series of demands and decisions on the implementation of this or that paragraph of the resolution was taken in rapid succession and came hammering down, regardless of the facts of the situation suffered by Iraq.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

I am also forced here to remind the Council, and through it the international community, that the countries to which I have referred did not stop at Iraq's compliance with the provisions of resolution 687 (1991) as a condition for lifting the economic sanctions. Weeks after the resolution had been adopted and Iraq had begun implementing its provisions those countries announced that they would not be prepared to lift the economic embargo until the political leadership of Iraq was replaced. These countries continue reiterating this precondition, despite its flagrant contradiction of the principles of the United Nations Charter and contents of the resolutions adopted by the Council itself. Thus those States have exploited resolution 687 (1991) to achieve political objectives not provided for in the resolution, in the way they exploited resolution 687 (1991), as I explained earlier.

The noisy storms started by certain elements in the inspection teams who came to serve the objectives of those countries were exploited to adopt new Council resolutions containing provisions even more extreme than those contained in resolution 687 (1991), without regard to Iraq's difficult circumstances. The objective was to blackmail Iraq, keep the finger of accusation pointed at it, use this false and distorted climate to maintain the iniquitous economic embargo imposed against the people of Iraq and ultimately exploit the situation in a manner that would enable those countries to issue, whenever they chose, threats of the use of force against Iraq once again in order to accomplish the objectives envisaged by them for a change of the political system in Iraq, and indeed to complete the fulfilment of the dream of destroying Iraq.

In our notes and letters to the Council and while talking to Ambassador Ekeus during his three visits to Baghdad, particularly the last visit, we have said: "You keep raising doubts about this or that issue. So

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let us sit together at the level of experts from both the Special Commission and from Iraq, in order to review every aspect and every question. Let us discuss every subject. We are ready to cooperate, as we have done on many occasions with the inspection teams when the Iraqi experts had the chance to sit together with the members of those teams and conducted with them scientific, professional discussions in a constructive atmosphere." The Iraqi experts responded to thousands of questions put to them and provided thousands of documents of information and data requested by the teams. The most recent of such discussions were those held with the two members of the Special Commission in late January 1992, which were also most fruitful and positive.

Twenty-nine inspection teams have so far visited Iraq; the heads of 24 have issued fair and objective statements, pointing to the good cooperation extended by the Iraqi authorities and to the positive results achieved. I wish in this respect to refer to the positive statement made recently by Maurizio Zifferero, of the tenth nuclear inspection team, in which he stressed and praised the cooperation of the Iraqi side with the inspection teams. So why do we not adopt this objective and constructive approach? And why do we keep seeing provocation and accusation resorted to? The reason is clearly political, completely ill-intended, and has nothing real to do with the process of fulfilling the provisions of resolution 687 (1991).

We have come to this meeting in good faith and with a true desire to make the facts clear, reach an understanding with the Council on the matters relevant to implementing resolution 687 (1991), clarify the matters about which doubts and allegations are raised, and address the issues that need to be resolved. Our delegation is ready to clarify to the Council all relevant points which it wishes to know about.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

I also wish to make the following observations on a number of issues raised, particularly in the recent presidential statement of 28 February.

First, Iraq is ready to continue cooperating with the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in order to accomplish the tasks stipulated in resolution 687 (1991).

Secondly, having submitted huge amounts of data, information and documents and answered thousands of questions put by inspection teams, Iraq is ready to continue cooperating in this respect in order to complete the picture in accordance with the goals of resolution 687 (1991).

Thirdly, Iraq is ready to reach a practical solution to the question of the Security Council's verification of Iraq's capabilities to produce the weapons prohibited by resolution 687 (191).

Fourthly, Iraq is ready to reach a practical mechanism regarding the issue of the equipment covered by the provisions of paragraph 8 of resolution 687 (1991), with a view to rendering this equipment harmless.

Iraq is willing to do those things on the basis of respect for its sovereignty and dignity and non-infringement upon its national security, and thus not allowing the objectives stipulated in resolution 687 (1991) to be turned into a means of preventing our people and country from living their free, normal life like all other free peoples in the world.

On the question of completing the information and data, about which doubts and allegations continue to be raised, our delegation proposes that a technical meeting be held, at the earliest time convenient to the Council, between Iraqi representatives and representatives of the Special Commission, and attended by representatives of all States members of the Security

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Council. The Special Commission will submit at this meeting all its demands for data and information and put all questions connected with resolution 687 (1991). During this meeting a comprehensive review will be made of all data, information and documentation presented by Iraq at the request of the Special Commission.

Following this a comprehensive report on the situation will be presented to the Council within a specific period of time, in order that we may remove this issue from the cycle of allegations, frictions, misunderstandings and ill-intended political positions, and place it in its right, objective framework, so that the Council can see the facts as they actually are. By these means the Council's demand for a full, complete and final declaration of the programmes in question will have been met in a scientific, objective and reliable manner. We are ready to embark on this operation as of today if the Special Commission and the IAEA are ready.

Regarding the operations to verify Iraq's capabilities to produce prohibited weapons in the future, we have reaffirmed our willingness to cooperate, while underlining the need for respect for considerations of Iraqi sovereignty and national security. Practical arrangements should be reached within the framework of the objective identified by the Security Council. Such arrangements should not go beyond this framework to achieve political and intelligence purposes.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

The Special Commission has, for instance, chosen to use U-2 aircraft to conduct flights over Iraqi territory. This aircraft belongs to the United States of America, whose Administration has been announcing on a daily basis its intention to strike at and destroy the political leadership of Iraq. Are we to accept that this aircraft is used solely for the tasks of the Special Commission, or is it being used for intelligence purposes? We have a right here to raise doubts and apprehensions. For how are we to interpret the fact that we have seen this aircraft conduct around 15 flights over Baghdad alone, each flight lasting three to four hours; and that this operation was repeated several times within one month earlier this year? Why is it that we fail to choose another aircraft, from an impartial State, to operate from an Iraqi airfield with an Iraqi pilot accompanying its crew, in order that we may be satisfied that the operation will be carried out to accomplish the objectives of resolution 687 (1991) and not political or intelligence objectives threatening Iraq's security? How long will these extraordinary measures continue? Does not the basic principle of respect for Iraq's sovereignty and security call for the determination of a reasonable period for these suspect reconnaissance operations to be brought to an end? It is imperative, therefore, that this subject be discussed in a serious and fair manner.

In order to determine the issue of ongoing monitoring in a final and constructive manner, we propose that a common discussion of the plans related thereto be held. The inspection teams evinced an understanding of this view when we proposed it to them during their visits to Iraq.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

As regards the equipment which can be modified for non-prohibited use, in accordance with resolution 687 (1991), we must ask: What is the real objective sought in paragraph 8 of resolution 687 (1991)? Is it to prevent Iraq from becoming an industrialized country and to destroy all its industries and all the advance industrial property in its possession? Or is the objective to verify the non-production of weapons prohibited under resolution 687 (1991)? If the former is the objective, can any people accept a situation in which it is deprived of its advanced industrial base and pushed back to the pre-industrial age - which was the threat I received from the United States Secretary of State during our meeting in Geneva on 9 January 1991? The people of Iraq will never accept that. But if the objective of the Council is to verify the non-use of this equipment in the production of prohibited weapons, on the basis of resolution 687 (1991), then we are ready to cooperate in this regard.

The current resolutions and plans, with their general language, are capable of being used in this or that direction. What we ask is that the language be carefully selected in the light of the objective set, and that methods of implementation and conduct be determined for the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to follow, again in the light of the objective set.

It is possible to reach a reasonable formula by which the objective can be achieved while, at the same time, preserving Iraq's legitimate rights and its sovereignty and security.

On this question we wish to make certain points.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

There is an extremist approach in interpreting subparagraph (b) of paragraph 9 of resolution 687 (1991), which determines the mechanism of implementing paragraph 8. This approach calls only for destruction, whereas the original paragraph allows such equipment to be rendered harmless.

The overwhelming part of the equipment and machines in question are for general use and can only be turned to special use by attaching dies, tools and fixtures. This fact is basic knowledge to everyone involved in industry. Why is it not enough to destroy these accessories and thus guarantee that machines and equipment are not turned to prohibited use? Why this insistence on the total destruction of these machines and this equipment? How, for instance, can we understand the insistence on total destruction of a computer system simply because it has been used to calculate the performance of the rocket motor, when it would be sufficient to erase the programme from the computer disc, or even destroy the disc itself? How are we to interpret the destruction of ordinary cooling equipment which had been used to cool the chamber housing the rocket motor? How are we to interpret the demand that a building should be destroyed simply because it housed machines that were to be used in producing the bodies for the rocket motors? How can we understand the demand for the destruction of equipment that can be used in the production of tooth fillings and bone replacement and of testing equipment for communication and electricity network systems?

In order to solve all these matters, our delegation proposes that the Special Commission prepare a complete and final list of all the machines and equipment concerned, which the Commission proposes for destruction or for being rendered harmless? The Special Commission can do this without difficulty because it has already inventoried all the machines and equipment relating to resolution 687 (1991). The list is to be submitted to the

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Security Council, with representatives from Iraq attending in order to convey our view on whether it is or is not possible to use the equipment for prohibited purposes. If it is thought that the Council, in its present form, cannot carry out this task, then every Member State could be represented by specialized experts capable of verifying the data and information submitted by both the Special Commission and the Iraqi representatives. Thus it would be possible to come to a decision based on objective grounds and related to the goal identified in resolution 687 (1991).

In this way, the goal can be achieved free of suspicion, allegation and the atmosphere of tension, and free of ill-intended political objectives.

The Security Council has entrusted certain tasks to the Special Commission. But these tasks should remain technical in nature, and the Council should not relinquish its authority in taking the final decision on matters of a political and legal nature relating to the destiny of a free people and the fate of properties which that people cherishes and finds of use in helping it to move towards regaining its prosperity.

Keeping matters vague and unresolved, preserving for the Special Commission alone the absolute power of issuing decisions, means that the fate of properties belonging to the people of Iraq - indeed the very destiny, sovereignty and security of that people - will remain indefinitely in the hands of a body that does not exist under the United Nations Charter, without allowing Iraq to have any say in the matter. Is that the objective the Security Council set for itself by adopting its resolutions?

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

I should like to add here that the understanding by the Security Council of the principles and the legitimate and logical demands we have submitted naturally leads to a fair, equitable and objective implementation of those essential requirements sought from Iraq in resolutions 687 (1991), 707 (1991) and 715 (1991). This would reassure the Council.

I shall now read out this additional paragraph in English:

(spoke in English)

The understanding by the Security Council of the logical and legitimate principles, basis and requests which we have presented will naturally lead to an objective, equitable and just implementation of the substantive obligations placed upon Iraq in resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991), in a manner which will satisfy the Council.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

(spoke in Arabic)

Finally, what is the position of the Security Council on the subject of the economic embargo? In spite of all that has been fulfilled in the context of implementing the provisions of resolution 687 (1991), the Council has not budged an inch in its position on the question of the embargo. Nor has the Council taken into consideration adherence to the United Nations Charter and international law in respect of the rights of the civilian population.

Thirteen months have now gone by since the cease-fire and longer still since the adoption of resolution 660 (1990) on the basis of which the economic embargo was imposed; the people of Iraq remain deprived of their right to lead a normal life and to import all their humanitarian needs. In theory, Iraq has been allowed to import medicines and foodstuffs. But Iraqi assets in other countries continue to be frozen. Despite the fact that the Security Council has decided to authorize the countries concerned to take their own decision to unfreeze the assets in question, most countries, particularly the Council's member States, have failed to take such a decision. Moreover, Iraq is not allowed to export any commodities or goods whatsoever in order to use the revenues from such exports to purchase food, medicine and other humanitarian needs.

Iraq is a country that has made an outstanding contribution to the establishment of human civilization. The museums of London, Paris, Berlin and New York are full of treasures highlighting the greatness of Iraqi civilization. It was from amongst the people of Iraq that Abraham, the father of all prophets, emerged to the world. It was this people that invented writing and established the world's first legal code setting out the rights

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

and obligations of man. This is the people that is subjected to such injustice and such iniquity. How long will this ancient nation endure this situation? How long indeed will mankind stand for it?

This people is prohibited from importing the chlorine it needs to sterilize its drinking water. And now it is demanded that the factory that produces chlorine be destroyed. Further, Iraq is prevented from importing or producing the materials it needs to combat the plant diseases that could claim a major share of its agricultural produce, on the pretext that they are chemical materials that can be used in weapons production. Indeed, the sanctions Committee has gone so far as to prevent Iraq from importing even soap and detergents.

The people of Iraq, which through its history of 6,000 years, has given the world philosophers, poets and men of letters, and which established the world's first university, is prevented today from importing any needed educational materials and the paper needed to print school textbooks and student notebooks.

Allow me at this point to reiterate a fact underscored by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, former special representative of the Secretary-General, at a press conference he held here in the United Nations building on 22 July 1991 following his visit to Baghdad from 29 June to 13 July 1991. In response to a question, he said it would be difficult to deny that the Iraqi people was being punished through the economic sanctions, while that had not been the objective sought by the Security Council's resolutions.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

The question constantly asked by 18 million Iraqis, along with millions of other honest, free people throughout the world, is how long this iniquitous siege will continue to be imposed on Iraq. How long will the sanctions Committee continue to hold the absolute arbitrary power to determine the needs of the Iraqi people? How can the right of veto in the hands of five member States since the founding of the United Nations be interpreted as a means of determining whether a people should be allowed to buy soap, printing paper or children's toys?

You, members of the Council, ask Iraq to implement this and comply with that, and Iraq has been fulfiling its obligations month after month. We have submitted to the Council a comprehensive, factual report on what has been fulfilled, and have expressed our willingness to cooperate on sound bases emanating from the United Nations Charter and from the principles of justice and fairness.

What obligations has the Council, for its part, fulfilled towards the people of Iraq? The answer is none whatsoever. Even when the Council adopted a resolution formally, and theoretically, allowing Iraq to export limited quantities of oil in order to be able to pay for food and medical purchases, the Council included, both in the resolution itself and in the implementation plan, an endless list of preconditions, all of which infringe upon Iraq's sovereignty and security: preconditions which constitute flagrant interference in Iraq's internal affairs and which stem from ill-intended political objectives. The Council has imposed further preconditions which practically prevent Iraq from meeting its people's needs for food and medicine.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

We call upon the Security Council to abandon that position in favour of an objective and fair one. We have demonstrated in good faith our readiness to cooperate. The Security Council ought, for its part, to show willingness to fulfil its obligations towards the people of Iraq and proceed from a position of good faith in dealing with Iraq.

I prepared my statement before this meeting. At this meeting I heard an important statement read out by you, Mr. President, as well as statements by the members of the Council. I shall wish to make clear, accurate and unambiguous comments on the points you raised in your report which remain the subject of doubts or on which information is incomplete. I shall want also to comment on some of the concerns expressed by several members. I leave it to you, Sir, to set a time at which I can make those remarks. If you were kind enough to ask when it would be most convenient for me, I would reply that I would hope for a meeting tomorrow. That is a mere request: the decision is for the President to make.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The plan was to suspend the meeting now until 4.30 this afternoon, when Mr. Hans Blix and Ambassador Rolf Ekeus will speak under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, and when other speakers too will make statements. The Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq will have an opportunity to make a statement either at the end of this meeting or tomorrow morning, depending on the way in which the meeting develops.

If that is agreeable, we shall proceed accordingly at this afternoon's meeting.

Before suspending the meeting, I invite members to assemble for informal consultations at 4.30 p.m., after which the present meeting will be resumed.

The meeting was suspended at 2.35 p.m.